

# Bhagwatamrit

The Elixir of the Bhagwat



Discourses by  
**Swami Akhandanand Saraswati Ji Maharaj**

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**The Elixir of the Bhagwat**

**Discourses**

**By**

**Swami Akhandanand Saraswati**

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## **Shri Harih**

### **Blessings**

A fourteen day discourse by our Sad Gurudev, Pujya Swami Shri Akhandanand Saraswatiji Maharaj, was held in the Navratri of the Shravan of 1980. Talks were held every evening at the Birla Mandir Park in India's Capital, New Delhi. These public talks were organized by Shri Laxminivas Birla.

Pujya Maharajshri had, in the short period of the above mentioned session, given the audience an appealing and exceptional glimpse of his eloquence, learning and experience of this voluminous literary work, the Shrimad Bhagwat Mahapurana.

The talks were published in a book titled 'Bhagwatamrit', in 1981, and were welcomed wholeheartedly by avid readers all over India. Four editions have been printed due to popular demand.

Due to repeated requests by the English speaking public, the Sat Sahitya Prakashan Trust acquiesced to my request to publish an English version of 'Anand Ullas', for the benefit of these who prefer to read English. Not only did the readers appreciate Pujya Maharajshri's thoughts, but it inspired the Pune based devotee couple, Smt. Sarli and Shri Laxman Sabnani to appeal to me, to be allowed to render the service of sponsoring the translation of one more of Pujya Maharajshri's literary works. This couple has been receiving the Grace of Pujya Maharajshri for long.

I gave the task to Smt. Purnima L. Toolsidass, as she had translated 'Anand Ullas'. She is a disciple of Pujya Maharajshri, and has boundless devotion for him. She began the translation immediately, with great joy. The book comes to your hands as a result of her tireless effort. I have full faith that reading, and contemplating upon this work will bring fulfillment to your lives, because of Sad Gurudev's enthralling style and rendering.

My heartfelt blessings to Purnima, and to the devotee couple, Smt. Sarli and Shri Laxman Sabnani, for their contributions. May they be inspired to continue to contribute thus, through the Sat Sahitya Prakashan Trust, for the benefit of mankind.

Finally, I bless Shri Rajeev Bathra, who is a prime devotee of Pujya Maharajshri, and has organized the exquisite presentation and printing of this book.

I pray to the Paramatma, the Father of us all, that Pujya Maharajshri's words may continue to reach people all over the world, and people everywhere may derive the benefits they bestow.

**Vrindavan**  
**Makar Sankranti**  
**14<sup>th</sup> January 2005.**

**Omkaranand**

Ever Loving Memory of our Dear Parents

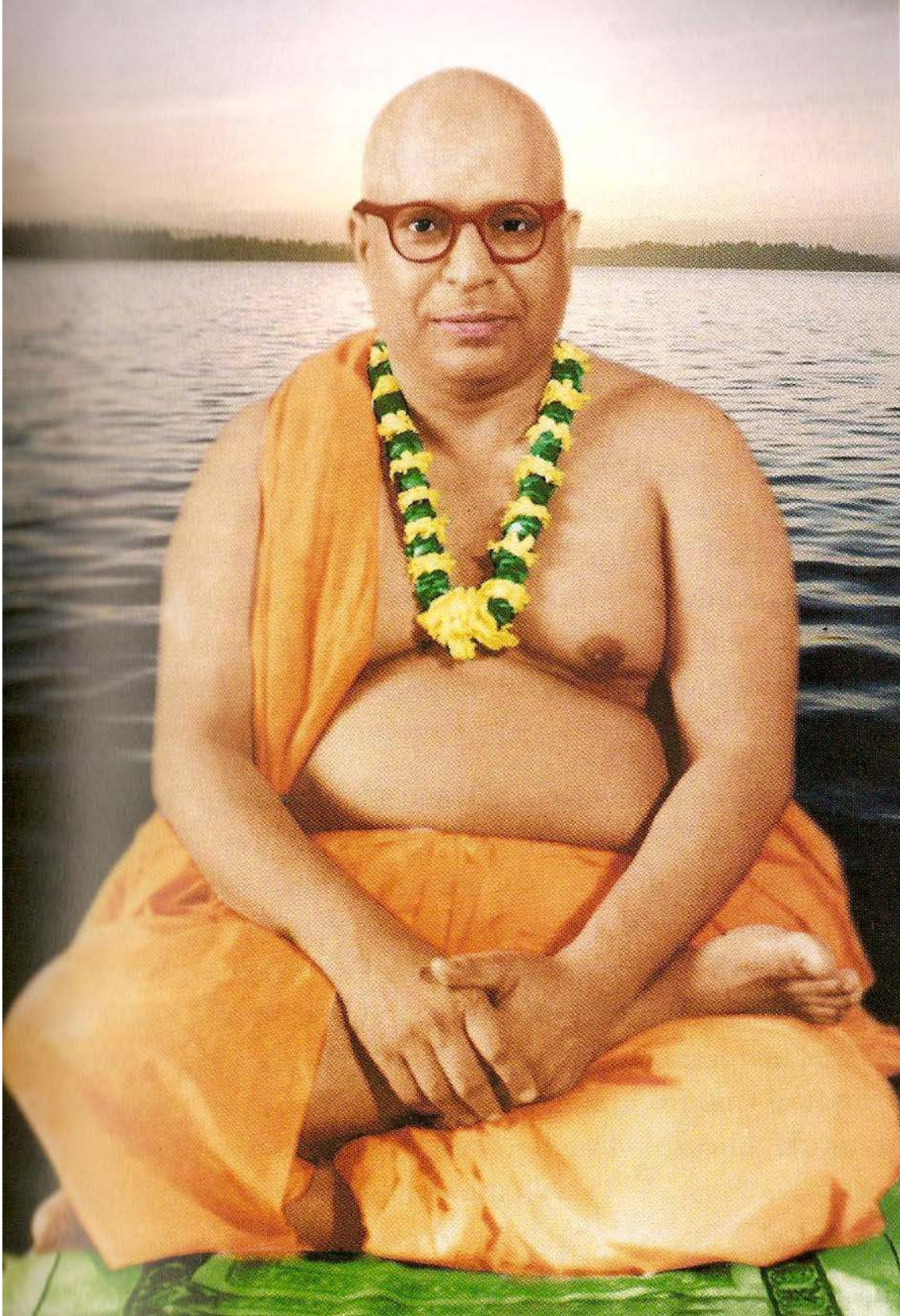


Shree and Shremati Khemchand Daulatram Sabnani



Shree and Shreemati Thakurdas Tuljaram Mahtani





**Swami Akhandanand Saraswati ji Maharaj**

## FOREWORD

The Shrimad Bhagwat Mahapurana is a highly respected treatise of eighteen thousand verses. It has been a tradition, for the devoted Hindus, to have a seven day discourse of the Shrimad Bhagwat. It is believed that this gives salvation to the departed soul. A real challenge for a scholar would lie in his ability to expound upon the contents of the Bhagwat. Param Pujya Maharajshri was renowned, amongst other things, for being an authority on this most respected part of our scriptures.

The Shrimad Bhagwat opens at the end of the Mahabharata. To understand the contexts with greater clarity, one needs a background of that famous epic. Shri Vedavyas is believed to have written the Mahabharata and also the eighteen Puranas, of which the Bhagwat is one. Some people, who are not well versed with our scriptures, tend to mix up the Bhagwat with the Bhagwat Gita, which is a part of the Mahabharata. The respect commanded by the Shrimad Bhagwat Mahapurana is due to the fact that it reveals the highest and best of the substance of our scriptures, philosophies and sciences. It has a holistic approach to life and gives clear and positive directions on the right attitudes for every good fortune, and every misfortune. Although the emphasis is on Bhakti, it carries the reader or listener, right up to the highest philosophy of the Vedas and enlightenment, without losing an iota of Bhakti, and without making us impractically idealistic.

The importance accorded to the Shrimad Bhagwat Mahapurana, arises from the fact that it presents the highest Bhakti, harmonized and synthesized with Gnan. It is this unique characteristic, which is presented so distinctly and appealingly by Maharajshri, which gives this Purana the special status of being called the verbal form of the Lord.

It is only by the Grace of my Guru, Swami Akhandanandji Maharaj, (and the loving inspiration of Swami Omkaranand Saraswatiji) that this translation of a short commentary of this great work could be presented to those who seek a deeper and richer existence, and a higher goal. Pujya Maharajshri had an amazing ability to express the most difficult subjects, and bring them within the scope of interest and understanding for those who are new to spiritual philosophy. His genius lay also in the fact that he made the driest subject come alive, and showed us how religion is an applied science for a finer level of existence, which is more satisfying, less hassle some, and more contributory to an ethical social order. While Maharajshri could elaborate at length, without becoming repetitive or dull, he could – with equal ease – speak in brief, with equal depth, and with fresh insights, on any given subject – no matter how often he spoke upon it. He was known for his skill for keeping within the subject chosen, and his masterly rounding off, exactly on the dot of the stipulated time, and his personal emotional link with each attentive listener. To hear people marvel that the questions in their hearts were answered during his talks, was a common phenomenon, which ceased to surprise anyone who heard him speak a couple of times.

A Saint like Maharajshri is rare indeed – and through him, we came to know a little of the other great Saints he knew! The readers will know that it is he who speaks, and will be enriched by Maharajshri's abounding grace, because grace continues, even when Saints leave physically. Any shortcoming or mistake (in the translation) is entirely due to the lacking of the instrument, and for this, I seek the reader's pardon. I know that just as I have had the experience of Maharajshri's grace – which is not separate from the Grace of

the Lord – so can every person who enters this rendering with faith, and an open heart. A sincere seeker will experience equally, the same divine Grace, which is so familiar to those who came into contact with Maharajshri, even once!

**Purnima L.Toolsidass**  
**Kolkata.**  
**August 2004.**



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## **Maharaj Shri – A Brief Introduction.**

The region of Varanasi is considered to be amongst the holiest regions in India. Swami Akhandanandji Saraswati, whom we generally refer to as Maharaj Shri, was born on Friday, 25<sup>th</sup> July, 1911, in this region, in a village called Maharai, in the lineage of Saryupaareen Brahmins. This was exactly nine months after his Grandfather had prayed to Shri Shantanu Behari, the Lord of Vrinadavan. According to the lunar calendar, it was the Amavasya of the month of Shravan, in the Samvat 1968. Since the baby's birth was by the Grace of the Lord, he was named Shantanu Behari.

Famous and learned astrologers predicted that the baby's lifespan was only nineteen years. Fear of death made Maharaj Shri move towards the path to spirituality. All the great Saints and Sages stated clearly, that they could not save a person from his destined death, but they could certainly impart the Knowledge which would remove all fear of death forever. And, that is exactly what happened. The Nectarine Brahman manifested in Maharaj Shri's heart, and the dark shadow of death was gone forever.

Maharaj Shri went to Jhusi, to meet Brahmachari Prabhudattaji, who has acquired great renown. It was there that he first saw Shri Udiyababaji Maharaj, and had the opportunity to discuss Vedanta. Maharaj Shri was captivated by Baba's conviction in the principle of Non-dual Reality, and by the unique, carefree bliss of this liberated soul. Baba showered unstinted filial love on Maharajshri. It was by his inspiration that Maharaj Shri became a Monk, and received initiation from the Shankaracharya of Jyotishpeeth, Swami Shri Brahmanandji Saraswati. Before he was initiated, Maharaj Shri worked for seven years, on the editorial board of the Kalyan publications of Gorakhpur.

Maharaj Shri was ten, when his Grandfather made him read the original Bhagwat in Sanskrit. Since then, the Shrimad Bhagwat stayed by him, like a faithful companion. Maharaj Shri was an authority on Vedantic philosophy, and all the Indian scriptures. His daily discourses were filled with his own inner joy, and continued unbroken until the evening of 17<sup>th</sup> November, 1987. Even today, those who love to listen to discourses, obtain the joy of watching and listening to his audio-visual recordings, and reading his books.

At about two am, the Brahmela of 19<sup>th</sup> November 1987 (the Margasheersha Krishna Trayodashi of the lunar calendar) the individual space merged into the universal space, and Maharaj Shri became All-pervading.

Maharaj Shri's life clearly showed his equal love and goodwill towards all he met, regardless of their religious background, their level of intelligence, sex, age, or social status. Each person who met him received what his heart desired. Maharaj Shri continued to bestow lavishly, all the four Purusharthas, and even the Pancham Purushartha, Bhakti.

The Anand Vrindavan Ashram established by Maharaj Shri is – in the holy city of Vrindavan – akin to the Teertharaj Prayag, where the three streams of Karma, Bhakti, and

Gnan are merged. The activities of the Ashram include Satsang, serving the Lord in temples, serving the cows and Monks, teaching the Vedas to young students, a charitable dispensary, etc. Maharaj Shri also started the memorable practice of celebrating the birth anniversaries of all the great Acharyas, bringing together the teachings of different traditions. This is a perfect example of his magnanimous outlook.

## **BHAGAWATAMRIT**

### **The Elixir of the Bhagwat**

**By**

**Swami Akhandanandji Saraswati**

#### **Pravarchan I Skandha I**

Shri Uddhavji Maharaj pleaded with the Lord, “Lord, You will disappear when You have achieved Your mission for the sake of Your devotees, and after having given them Bliss. Then, how will people derive the benefits given by Your presence, Your Leela \* and the Dharma\* propagated by You?”

The Lord Shri Krishna said, “Uddhavji, in the past, whenever I disappeared, I would go either to My abode, Vaikunth, or to the Ksheersagar\*. This time, however, I will not go to either of these, I will immerse into the ocean of the Shrimad Bhagwat.”

तिरोधाय प्रविष्टोऽयं श्रीमद्भागवतार्णवम् ।

*Tirodhaaya pravishtoayam shrimadbhaagawataarnavam.*

Therefore, although the Lord Shri Krishna vanished from sight, He established Himself in the nectarine ocean of the Shrimad Bhagwat. It is His verbal image which we have before us now.

तेनेयं वाङ्मयी मूर्तिः प्रत्यक्षं वर्तते हरेः ।

*Te`ne`yam vaangmayee moortih pratyaksham vartate`hare`h.*

Even today, we can imbue the same elixir, by listening to the Shrimad Bhagwat Mahapurana\*, which the Lord’s devotees drank all through their five sense organs, when the Lord dwelt on earth as Shri Krishna. This bliss is not a remote, unseen factor. It is a physical experience, because the Lord Shri Krishna has not left us and gone to some other realm. He did not just disappear. He manifested His very Self in the form of the Shrimad Bhagwat.

Therefore, when the question arose, as to whom this nectarine Bhagwat should be given to – should it be given to Parikshit or should it be given to the demigods of heaven – Shri Shukadevaji rejected the demigods, in favor of Parikshit. How different are the two types of elixir! There can be no comparison between the divine elixir of the Bhagwat, and the nectar of the demigods.

We will first consider a worldly viewpoint, which is worth noting. After traveling all over the world, Naradaji came to the region called ‘Bharat’\*, where religion was said to reign supreme. He visited many centers of pilgrimage, but nowhere did he find peace. Nor did he find true happiness, or true righteousness. He was deeply agitated when he finally came to the banks of the Yamuna, in Vrindavan, and here, he had a diving vision. He saw something, which can generally never be glimpsed by common people.

You see, Bhakti\*, Gnan\* and Vairagya\* are all feelings which have no visible physical form. We can only feel the emotion; never see the physical form of these feelings. It is in the heart that Bhakti, Gnan and Vairagya appear. No one in this world can experience a physical manifestation of these ethereal demigods.

However, when Naradaji came to Vrindavan, even the ethereal became the gross, feelings took on forms. He saw that Bhakti was young, here, but her sons, Gnan and Vairagya, were aged. The significance of this is that the people of Vrindavan have a lot of devotion for the Lord, but scant respect for Knowledge, and hardly any Detachment either. The people had accepted Bhakti without Gnan or Vairagya.

Naradaji realized that Bhakti can never be total, if there is no knowledge and no detachment. Without the requisite knowledge and detachment, what would be the object of devotion? He saw that there was no visualization of the Lord, who is the object of devotion, no knowledge about Him, and there is a lack of detachment from the worldly factors which prevent us from turning towards the Lord. Love for God requires detachment, to enable us to free ourselves from worldly attachments.

But Naradaji saw no sign of Vairagya or Gnan being awake. Both of them are the sons – the fruits – of Bhakti. When Bhakti enters the heart, we begin to acquire Knowledge about the object of our devotion, and we rise above the duality of worldly attachments and aversions. Vairagya is the state when attachments and aversions are either absent, or negligible. A love for one, and a hatred for another, results in those we love (or hate) taking the place of the Lord in our hearts. Then we are unable to glimpse the Lord in our heart. We see, instead, the hated enemy or the beloved friend. Worldly factors thus encroach upon the territory which belongs to the Lord. This is why worldly

attachments and devotion to God can never go hand in hand. It is essential that only the pure beauty of the Lord shines in our heart.

The lack of peace in this world troubled Naradaji. He was distressed by the friction, conflicts, and intense passions which prevailed even in the pilgrimages. The deficiency in Bhakti, her restlessness and lack of joy, made him even more unhappy. Hearing her pleas for help, Naradji began to contemplate, seeking to find a way to make her happy and fulfilled. Just then, he heard a celestial voice telling him that he would be free of his own sorrow, Bhakti would be free of her troubles, and Gnan and Vairagya would be roused from their stupor, when he (Naradji) met some sages who would give him the solution.

Hearing this, Naradaji took recourse at the feet of his Gurus, the Sanakadis\*. These four, Sanak, Sunandan, Sanatan, and Sanatkumar, are sages whose virtues have been extolled repeatedly in the Shrutis\*. They dispelled Naradaji's sorrow by explaining the essence of true philosophy. This episode is well clarified in the Chandogya Upanishad. The Sanakadis advised that Bhakti, Gnan and Vairagya would be fully awakened, if they listened to the Shrimad Bhagwat. They then narrated the Bhagwat, to bring full consciousness to Bhakti, Gnan and Vairagya.

This is not, primarily, a Bhagwat\* Purana – that is, it is not mainly about Bhagwan\* - it is a Bhagwat\*, mainly about the devotees of the Lord - Purana. भगवतानां पुराणं भागवतपुराणम् *Bhagavataanaam puraanam bhaagavatapuraanam*. That, in which the description of the Lord's devotees exceeds the descriptions of the Lord, is called the Bhagwat Purana. The Lord has, Himself, spoken about the great qualities of His devotees, and therefore – भगवता प्रोक्तं *bhagavataa proktam* – grammatically becomes भागवतम् '*bhagavatam*'. The Bhagwat is, therefore, the Lord's own description of the wonderful qualities of His devotees.

The thrust of the message of the Bhagwat is that Creation is created by God, within Himself, and will dissolve in Him. Whatever is created within something is sustained within it, and is not separate from it. Thus, the creation we see is not separate from the God whose creation it is. It is His play, His Leela, His pleasure and His frolic.

What actually are the attractions and aversions we experience? We begin to favor those we like and sacrifice our integrity to help loved ones. We become unjust. Our love makes us partial to some, and sullies our heart. Our dislike turns into hatred and anger. We become violent and rebellious. Hate burns our heart to cinders. Attachment and aversion to any worldly factor vitiate our heart. Instead of an individual, we see an enemy or a friend. As a



result, we forget to see the Lord who is the base of all creation, just as gold is the base for all ornaments, and iron the base of all iron instruments, figures, etc. Instead of being full of love, our hearts are filled with hatred. The divine truth taught by the Shrimad Bhagwat is that we should focus upon the Lord who abides in every heart, in every thing, and in every place. This is the method for purifying our hearts. Nobody on earth can create goodwill through threat of punishment; fear of the Police, or of the Army, or the Law. People are troubled by the problems of the world. They ask, “Why is the world so full of negative tendencies, sorrow and strife?” This question has only one answer. It is because people have forgotten the Lord, the main cause of all Creation. When a person forgets God, there remains no place in his heart for Dharma\* to linger.

The main question raised in the Shrimad Bhagwat is, धर्मः कं शरणं गतः “*Dharmah kam shararam gatah*”. Where can we find Dharma today? Who protects Dharma? The answer is that God, Himself, is the instigator, protector and reward of Dharma. When people lose their love for God, when they no longer feel devotion for Him, when they lack faith, then their mind is divided into hundreds of worldly considerations. So, sharpen your vision. Purify it to the extent where your mind is not distracted, and you can see the Lord in everyone. Realize, that the person who causes sorrow, gives detachment. When someone makes us happy, he is ensnaring us in worldly factors. That is why we should be cautious about how we see the world. In the chapter which explains the importance of the Shrimad Bhagwat, it is clarified that – for those who wish to purify their minds – there is no better method than listening to the Bhagwat.

एतस्मात् अपरं किञ्चिन्मनःशुद्ध्यै न विद्यते ।

*E`tasmaat aparam kinchinmanah shuddhayai na vidyate`.*

This Bhagwat has come with the purpose of purifying people’s minds. A pure mind has pure desires, and when our desires are pure, our interaction with others will also be unsullied. This way, the whole world can be filled with joy and comfort, as the minds of more and more individuals get purified.

This is the message brought by the Shrimad Bhagwat. It awakens, in the hearts of those who hear or read it, the Knowledge which drives away all sin and sorrow. Sorrow is a result of sin, and the Shrimad Bhagwat dispels both. At the very beginning of the Shrimad Bhagwat, it is written:

तापत्रयविनाशाय श्रीकृष्णाय वयं नमः ।

*Taapatrayavinaashaaya shrikrishnaaya vayam numah.*

Sin is an instrument, an action resulting in sorrow. Any effort which results in sorrow is called ‘paapa’\*. Indulgence in paapa brings suffering. It is true that we can not indulge in sin when we sit down to hear the Bhagwat. This listening will help to free us from sin. But – what about the suffering which is bound to accrue from past sins? As a matter of fact, even that suffering is quietened when you begin to listen to the Bhagwat. This is why it is said:

प्रविष्टः कर्णरन्ध्रेण स्वानां भावसरोरुहम्।

धुनोति शमलं कृष्णः सलिलस्य यथा शरत्॥

*Pravishtah karnarandhre`na svaanaam bhaavasaroruham,*

*Dhunoti shamalam krishnah salilasya yathaa sharat.*

As soon as the Lord enters your heart through the opening in your ears, He will remove all the impurity therein.

You may be aware of this fact – and, incase you are not, you will now realize – that it is not possible to recognize, or identify, what you see before you, unless you possess previous knowledge about it. Unless someone has told you about it, you can’t even know the things you see every day. The sense organs cannot provide the information you need. You can understand only when told by someone. Therefore, just as the eyes give you information about the appearance of what is before you, words give information about that which you don’t know. What I mean is that by listening to the Shrimad Bhagwat, you can remove the sins and sorrows, which you did not know how to escape from.

One more point. Can we acquire water by just wanting it? Naturally not! Water is far away, it is inanimate, and it does not even know that we want it. But, that’s not the case with God, because He is not far from us. God is where the desire (for Him) is. When He sees, “This man desires Me”, the Lord who is behind the desire enters into our wish for Him. Water is not aware that it is desired, but God is aware when He is desired. Therefore, when we feel an impulse to go to Him, to listen to the Kathaa\* on the frolics of the Lord Vrinadavanbehari, Shri Krishna, we don’t have to go anywhere. The Lord manifests as soon as we wish to go to Him. Shukadevji Maharaj says, “Look, this is the bank of the Yamuna, and this is the Vata tree, under which the Lord Shri Krishna stood and played the flute, with one foot crossed behind the other. He was wearing golden colored robes, and there was a faint smile on His blue-hued countenance. His eyes were full of love,

and He beckoned us, saying, “Come, come, My beloved, come to Me.” Just see His smile! Just see His beauty! Come, let us listen to the talks upon His Leela – His frolics.”

So, as soon as the desire to hear about the Lord enters your heart, the Lord slips into that desire and takes a seat in your heart. The moment the Lord enters, your enemy will run away, your friend will leave, all worldly relationships will disappear. Only the Lord, Himself, will remain in your heart. The Shrimad Bhagwat states:

सद्यो हृद्यवरुध्यतेऽत्र कृतिभिः शुश्रूषुभिस्तत्क्षणात्।

*Sadyo hridyavaruddhyate`atra kritibhih shushrushubhistatkshanaat.*

No effort is more worthwhile than listening to the Kathaa. The Lord manifests in our heart just by our listening about Him. Our eyes fill with tears, our throat gets choked with emotion, our body begins to tingle, and right before our eyes, at that very moment, wherever we are sitting, and in the exact form which has just been described, the Lord appears and begins to play.

That is why the Shrimad Bhagwat is said to be the sum total of the essence of all our scriptures. It says, “Take, my brother, if you want Advait\*, or Dvaitadvait\* or Shuddhadvait\*.”

But, do you know what happened one day, when Shukadevaji Maharaj wandered around and came and sat at the foot of the Kalpataru\* of the Vedas? The Vedas asked him, “Mahatmaji, what do you desire?”

Shukadevaji replied that he did not desire anything. “I just – स्वप्रकाशे चिदात्मनि ब्रह्मणि सुखमास्महे *svaprakaashe` chidatmani brahmani sukhamaasahe`* - sit in the bliss of my self-illumination, which is none other than the realization of the Brahman. Why should I desire anything?”

The Kalpavriksha\* said, “You came and sat beneath me. How can I allow such a guest, who is a form of the Brahman, to depart without a gift from me? Here – take the best of my delicious fruits – निगमकल्पतरुर्गलितं फलं *nigamakalpatarorgalitam falam* – I give you this. It will become even sweeter by the touch of your lips.”

That is why Vyasji has said, पिबत भागवतं रसामालयं मुहुरहो रसिका भुवि भावुकाः “*Pibata bhaagavatam rasaamaalayam muhuraho rasikaa bhuvi bhaavukaah*”. It is an invitation to those who love good things, and also to those who desire heavenly joys after death. All are welcome to come and partake of happiness in this life itself.

See, Dharma gives unseen results, but the fruit of Bhakti is visible. The joy of devotion for the Lord, the joy of remembering Him, worshipping Him, chanting His name – all these joys are instantly given by Bhakti. Moreover, it moulds the Antahkaran\* in such a way that we also obtain the joys of heaven after death. Gnan dispels vanity, and Bhakti accompanies us to whichever worlds we go to.

This is why we have the descriptions about giving up knowledge after our nescience has been dispelled – ज्ञानं च मयि संन्यस्तं *gnanam cha mayi sannagast*. This knowledge is not something separate from God; nor is there any need to differentiate between the Lord and Knowledge about Him. Bhakti, however, is such a quality that it abides before we meet Him, remains when we meet Him, and stays even after we have met Him. The purpose of Bhakti is to bring sweetness into our lives.

Bhakti is described in the Shrimad Bhagwat, for our benefit in this world, as well as in the next world, and also for giving us instantaneous experience of the essence of the Lord. That is why it is said, about the Shrimad Bhagwat:

यस्यां वै श्रूयमाणायां कृष्णे परमपूरुषे ।  
भक्तिरुत्पद्यते पुंसः शोकमोहभयापहा ॥ १.७.७

*Yasyaam vai shruyamaanaayaam krishne`paramapurushhe`,  
Bhaktirutpadyate`punsah shokamohabhayaapahaa. 1.7.7.*

So come, listen to the Shrimad Bhagwat. Bhakti will enter, and remain seated in your heart while you listen, and then past experiences will sadden you no more. The possibilities of what the future may bring will no longer frighten you, and you will get detached from all worldly attachments. So, for those who wish to purify the antahkaran, there is no better way – indeed, no other way – than the Shrimad Bhagwat.

Now let us cast a quick glance over the chapters of the Shrimad Bhagwat. You have to realize that the Bhagwat contains eighteen thousand verses, composed of thirty-two letter words, in the metre called the Anushtup Chanda. The time we have is approximately twenty or twenty-one hours. It takes at least thirty hours to read just the Sanskrit verses. Even those who routinely read the Bhagwat can not read it faster. The best we can do, under the restraint of time, is to cast a flying glance upon the Bhagwat. You must view the Shrimad Bhagwat this way.

The first Skandha\* of the Bhagwat is called the ‘Adhikari\* Skandha’. It describes the qualities of the one who gives the discourse, and of those who listen to it. When a ritual worship is undertaken for after-life happiness, it is called a ‘pariplava’ undertaking. In such a ritual, there has to be a

yajamana\*, and his associates. Stories from the Puranas\* are narrated to them, as part of the ritual. The priest doing the actual ritual make this a part of the worship, so that the minds of the people do not stray away from the main objective, into worldly thoughts and conversation. It is often the Bhagwat which is narrated.

Here, the Shaunakadi\* sages, which have undertaken the yagya, also listen to the Bhagwat. Because of this, the ritual is completed successfully. At the end, Sutaji, who is the speaker, develops Bhakti, and so do the Shaunakadi sages. In fact, Shaunakji develops such a strong feeling of devotion that he says:

कर्मण्यस्मिन्नाश्वासे धूमधूमात्मनां भवान्।  
आपाययति गोविन्दपादपद्मासवं मधु॥

*Karmanyasminnaashvaase` dhoomadhoomraatmanaam bhavaan,  
Aapaayayati govindapaadapadmaasavam madhu.*

“We are engrossed in a ritual worship like the Yagya. The smoke rises up and enters our mouth, nostrils, and eyes. It engulfs our antahkaran. You, however, sweeten our hearts with description of the nectar of the Lord’s lotus-like feet, which have the sweetness of honey.” This is how Shaunakji’s heart gets filled with Bhakti when he listened to the Puranas.

However, the Bhagwat was heard only as a part of the main ritual, of the Yagya. That made the Yagya the primary, and the Bhagwat the secondary purpose. The speaker was Suta, and the listeners were the Shaunakadi sages. Let us examine the next pair of speaker and listener of the Bhagwat. Eager to do whatever would benefit people, Vyasji divided the Vedas. He wrote the Brahmasutras to clarify the purport of the Upanishads. He wanted that even common people should be able to grasp the essence of life, righteous living, desires, wealth, and even liberation from the cycles of birth and death. This is why he wrote the Mahabharata – सर्वार्थपरिर्बृंहितम् *sarvaarthaparivrihitam*. Not a single subject has been left out in the Mahabharata –यन्नेहास्ति न तत्क्वचित् *yanne`hasti na tatkvaचित्*.

No wonder that it is said, व्यासोच्छिष्टं जगत् सर्वम् “*Vyasochishtam jagat sarvam*”. There has never been, and never will be, any epic to compare with the Mahabharata.

Even after completing seventeen Puranas, Vyasji felt that he had not completed his life's work. For the benefit of mankind, he began to write the Bhagwat.

The goal of mankind remains unfulfilled without the Bhagwat. Nor can mankind attain peace of mind. The dialogue between Narada and Vyas is given to explain this.

The sage Narada loves the Lord deeply. He is a devotee, so close to the Lord, as to be another form of the Lord. The Lord created Brahmaji\*, so that he could create the universe, direct it with natural laws, and then expound the Vedas. This means that the Lord appears as Brahmaji, and then appears as Naradji to promote love and devotion in the world. The same Lord appears as Vyasji, to systematically promote Dharma, Artha\*, Kama\* and Moksha\*. After that, He appears as Shukadevji, in order to manifest the verbal form of Divinity. The supreme Lord, who manifested as Brahma, Narada, Vyas, and as Shukadeva, has also manifested as the Bhagwat. The one Consciousness, the same Awareness, has many names. Narayana, Brahma, Narada, Shukadeva, and the Bhagwat. Vyasji found total peace after writing the Bhagwat.

The Lord Narada told Vyasji, "You have written many scriptures interpreting the tendencies of human nature. You have written about the qualities of husbands and wives, kings and commoners, how people behave, the causes of friction, the sarcasm they show, and the way they resolve problems – all this has been described by you. However you have not described the Lord's greatness the way it should be described.

न तथा वासुदेवस्य महिमा ह्यनुवर्णितः ।

*Na tathaa vaasude`vasya mahimaa hyanuvarnitah.*

Therefore, Vyasji, I suggest that you now remember Him.

समाधिनानुस्मर तद्विचेष्टितम्

*Samaadhinaanusmara tadviche`shtitam."*

Having said this, Naradaji began to narrate his own experiences. He said, "I had been born as the son of a maid servant, because I showed disrespect to sages." Naradaji was, earlier, a Gandharva\*. Then he was born as the son of a maid servant, and after that he was born as the son of Brahmaji. The story of three births of Naradaji is given in the Bhagwat.

Naradaji explained, "My mother used to work in the houses of the Brahmanas\*, and sages would come there, to spend the four monsoon



months called the chatrumas\*. I thus obtained the benefit of their company. An interest in spirituality awoke in me, and I began to sing hymns. I was granted a vision of the Lord. The Lord gave me this Veena\*, and I went everywhere, singing His glories joyfully.”

अहो देवर्षिर्धन्योऽयं यत्कीर्तिं शार्ङ्गधन्वनः ।  
गायन्माद्यन्निदं तन्त्र्या रमयत्यातुरं जगत् ॥ १.६.३९

*Aho de`varshirdhanyoayam yatkeerti sharangadhanvanah,  
Gaayanmaadyannidam tantryaa ramayatyaturam jagat. 1.6.39.*

Sutaji told Shaunaka and the other sages, that Naradaji is blessed. He goes around the universe, playing the Veena and singing the glories of the Lord, filling everyone with joy, wherever he goes.

Naradaji is a sage of exceptional qualities. He narrates the Shrimad Bhagwat to Vyasji. Shaunaka and the other sages had heard the Bhagwat as a part of their duty, but Vyasji listens with the specific wish of benefiting mankind. Parikshit is a listener who is cleansed of all tendencies, is Nirguna\*, and totally free of any worldly desire. Parikshit’s purity of heart is a part of his inheritance. A brief description of the Mahabharata war is given here, to clarify this fact. It is narrated how Ashwatthama beheaded the five little sons of Draupadi, towards the end of the war. What an extraordinarily piteous scene that was! Arjuna readied his chariot, Shri Krishna took the reins, and they brought back a defeated Ashwatthama. Just reflect upon what Draupadi said, when the murderer of her five sleeping sons was brought before her. Obtain a glimpse of the maternal love Draupadi’s heart was filled with. She said,

मुच्यतां मुच्यतामेष ब्राह्मणो नितरां गुरुः । १.७.४३

*Muchataam muchyataame`pa brahmano nitaraam guruh. 1.7.43.*

X

X

X

मा रोदीदस्य जननी गौतमी पतिदेवता । १.७.४७

*Maa rodyasya jananee gautamee pati de`vataa. 1.7.47.*

“Leave him! Let him go! He is a Brahmin by birth. He is our Guru. If he is killed, his mother will weep, just as I weep today. I know the anguish a mother feels, when her children die. Let not Ashwatthama’s mother go through this pain.”

Now, see the situation. Bhima urges that Ashwatthama should not be spared, and Draupadi pleads for his life. Yudhishtira and the other seniors support Draupadi. The Lord mediated and gave the solution.

You know, don’t you, how Draupadi is related to Parikshit? She is his paternal Grandmother. Parikshit is born into the family of this wonderful lady.

Now, switch your attention to Parikshit’s mother, Uttara. When Ashwatthama released the Brahmastra\* at her, she did not seek protection from Yudhishtira, Bhima, or Arjuna. She went to the Lord Shri Krishna. She prayed, “Lord, I do not fear death. I would accept death without any regrets, but the progeny of the lineage of Your devotees is in my womb. How will people feel any devotion for You, if he does not survive? Then the very tradition of devotion will disappear. Please, therefore, protect this unborn child, and protect the tradition of Bhakti.”

Shri Krishna thought, “So what if Parikshit doesn’t ask for protection? His mother is asking for it. If I fail to protect him at such a time, then when will I protect him? I should first of all, enter Uttara’s womb, and I should keep – not one – but two weapons with Me, for Parikshit’s safety.”

जुगोप कुक्षिं गत आत्तचक्रो मातुश्च में यः शरणं गतायाः । १०.१.६

*Jugopa kukshingata aattachakro maatushcha me`n yah sharanam gataayaah. 10.1.6.*

The Lord was in such a hurry, He became so impatient, that He entered Uttara’s womb. He went to a place where God is not supposed to go, since God is not subject to birth or death the way humans are. He went into Uttara’s womb and protected Parikshit. This is the same Parikshit who was protected by the Lord.

Now think of Subhadra, Parikshit’s paternal Grandmother. Abhimanyu was Subhadra’s son, and Parikshit was Abhimanyu’s son. Subhadra said not a word to Shri Krishna when her son Abhimanyu was killed. Why was she silent? She thought, “Shri Krishna is my brother. He is the Lord incarnate. He is aware of everything. He can see the events that happen before Him. Then, where is the need for me to say anything?” Subhadra’s devotion is of the silent kind, and Parikshit is her grandson.

Parikshit's Great-grandmother, Kunti, is a devotee beyond compare. If you so desire, you can undertake a research upon the topic, but nobody else in the world has asked for such a boon. The boon Kunti asks for is:

विपदः सन्तु नः शश्वत्तत्र तत्र जगद्गुरो।  
भवतो दर्शनं यत्स्यादपुनर्भवदर्शनम्॥ १.८.२५

*Vipadah santu nah shashvattatra tatra jagadguro,  
Bhavato darshanam yatsyaadapunarbhavadarshanam. 1.8.25.*

“Oh, God! Let crisis occur repeatedly in my life, because I see You whenever I face a crisis. You came when the Pandavas were banished into the forests. You came when Draupadi was on the verge of being stripped naked. You came when Bhimasena was poisoned. You came when we were in danger of being burnt in a house of wax. Thus, every time we faced danger, You came to protect us, and the crisis turned into a great good fortune and joy for us.”

So, Parikshit is born into a family which has ladies as devoted as Kunti, Subhadra, Draupadi and Uttara. If we cast an eye over his forefathers, we realize what great devotees they, too, were. What an amazing death the Patriarch, Bhishma had! How highly Yudhishtira respected Shri Krishna! How deeply Arjuna loved Him! How much faith Bhimasena had on Shri Krishna! How highly Nakula and Sahadeva revered Him! The whole clan of the Pandavas was fully devoted to the Lord. Parikshit was born into such a family that he had a vision of the Lord while still in the womb!

On the one hand, Parikshit is in the prime of life. He is the Monarch of the seven continents of the earth. Powerful demigods come to offer gifts at his feet. On the other hand, Shukadevaji Maharaj does not go to the house of any family man. He goes only when the cows are being milked. He waits until the householder finished milking the cow, drinks the milk, and departs. Shukadevaji is immensely detached from all worldly considerations. He possesses supreme knowledge, and meditates deeply. He is the best among Monks, and Parikshit is the best among devotees. These two are the ones who speak of, and listen to, the Bhagwat.

The Shrimad Bhagwat can be read as a Yagya, or for the benefit of people, or for developing detachment, or to liberate us from the cycles of birth and death. The Lord took into consideration the fact that it was not a sword which threatened Parikshit, and nor was it an arrow. “Had Parikshit been threatened by a weapon,” thought the Lord, “I would have come with My Gada\* and Chakra\* to protect him. However, when words are being used to

kill Parikshit, when he is being killed by a curse, then the Gada and Chakra, and even the Brahmastra are of no use. A verbal weapon must be countered by a verbal defense.” This is why the Lord Shri Krishna manifested Himself as the Shrimad Bhagwat, to save Parikshit from the curse.

If you hear the description of King Parikshit’s wealth and power, you will understand what great capacity he possessed. This indicates the range of competence and powers a person can attain, when graced by the Lord. King Parikshit traveled all over the seven continents, examining the face of everyone he encountered, wondering, “Is this person the Lord who protected me when I was in my mother’s womb?” Parikshit’s aspiration was so pure that he sought only the One who had entered his mother’s womb to protect him. His acid test was for the Divine.

People in this world defeat their enemies, defeat other kingdoms. Parikshit, however, defeated Kaliyuga\*. “Kaliyuga” is another name for “kaal”\*. It is not an ordinary achievement to conquer Time (or death). When Parikshit conquered Kaliyuga, he went on to conquer other lands. Wherever he went, he heard about the greatness of Shri Krishna. People would say, “This is the same Parikshit who was saved by Shri Krishna, while still in his mother’s womb.” “Oh! Parikshit’s father was the son of Shri Krishna’s sister Subhadra.” “Oh, Shri Krishna was always at hand to help his forefathers – Parikshit is blessed, indeed!”

My brother, you may or may not like what I say, but no other religious sect in the world has such a God! Who else has a God who lived thus, among those who loved Him and were devoted to Him? He sat as a commoner, at the court of Yudhishtira. He followed, when Yudhishtira walked ahead. He consented to become the Royal messenger, at Yudhishtira’s request. When He came from Dwarka, He would bow down, not only to Yudhishtira, but also to Bhimasena. In the Shrimad Bhagwat there is a description of Shri Krishna guarding the Pandavas, while they slept. Where else has God accepted such a commoner’s status? No other religious sect permits that for ordinary people, the Lord permeates every aspect of their daily life, and they can savor the sweetness of His presence in this manner. Our God is so compassionate that He does not separate Himself from us, no matter what condition we may be in.

So, wherever he went, Parikshit would hear the qualities of the Lord extolled. He would be moved to tears, to think that the Lord drove his grandfather’s chariot. Is it at all normal that the Lord sits as a mere servant obeying Arjuna’s commands? “My Grandfather, Arjuna, told the Lord where he wanted to be driven, and the Lord obeyed!” Parikshit would be overcome

with emotion with such thoughts. Tears would glisten in his eyes, his skin would tingle, and his heart would overflow with love.

Gaining victories, and moving ahead in this manner, Parikshit reached a spot where a cow and a bull were having a conversation. We all hear the sounds made by cattle, but Parikshit had the ability to understand what they were saying. He understood that the cow was actually Mother Earth, and the bull was Dharma, with three of his legs broken.

You see, the Earth upon who we live, is periodically happy and unhappy. The Earth is happy when people lead righteous lives. This can happen only when people control their sense organs – stop the eyes from straying, control the hand when it has an urge to do something wrong, not allow the feet to go where they shouldn't, and prevent the tongue from saying what should not be spoken. Dharma is the ability to control our lifestyle. Dharma means 'dhruti' – धृत्या यया धारयते '*dhrityaa yayaa dharayate*'. Dhriti stops a person from going on the wrong path. We may go where we please, provided we have control over our organs, speech, and mind. Nobody can predict where we'll end up, if there is no self control, righteousness, and the determination to prevent our inclinations from leading us to our doom.

The Earth is sad, when those who live on her lack discipline and righteousness, and when they lead immoral lives. The mother of sorrow is indiscipline and immorality. To eat, drink, say or do whatever we feel like, can never bring happiness. Can you trust your mind to the extent of considering every random desire as a righteous one? No, my brother, even the mind requires control and discipline. Our sense organs must function within the limits of morality. This morality, this control, and this discipline is called Dharma.

Where this Dharma becomes weak, sorrows spread all over the world. Parikshit saw that three of the bull's legs were broken, he had only one good leg, and he was very weak. When he heard the conversation between the cow and the bull, Parikshit began to think about what should be done. A little further, Parikshit saw a man, dressed like a King, wearing a crown, beautiful garments and ornaments. The man had a sword in his hand, and was beating the bull, destroying Dharma. Lifting his weapons, Parikshit challenged the man, asking how he dared to strike this bull - Dharma - in his kingdom. "Don't you know that I am from the clan of the Pandavas, protected by Shri Krishna?" Asked Parikshit. "I will slay you."

Hearing these words, the man threw off his crown and fell at the feet of Parikshit, like an ordinary commoner. Parikshit relented, "All right, since you have surrendered, I will not kill you."

This man was Kali. Kali means ‘kalaha’ – lack of goodwill; quarreling. Kalaha between father and son, between the Guru and disciple, between brothers, between husband and wife. This is called ‘Kali Kaal’\*. Parikshit conquered Kali, which means that he conquered the era which lacked goodwill, and said to him, “I banish you from my Kingdom.”

Kali said, “Your Majesty, I accept your verdict, but your reign extends over the entire world. Where am I to go?”

“Go where the drunkards stay, where there is gambling, violence, and adultery,” ordered Parikshit.

“Your Highness,” said Kali, “none of these vices exist in your Kingdom.”

Then Parikshit ordered Kali to go and stay where there is gold and great wealth. “These are causes for vanity, so go and live amongst them,” ordered Parikshit. Kali accepted his command.

So, Parikshit’s power was such that he subjugated even the Kaliyuga, and the seven continents were under his reign. There was no dearth of wealth, or righteousness in Parikshit’s life. He could do whatever he wanted to, and yet he abandoned everything to listen to the Bhagwat. His capacity to give up everything worldly was indeed astounding.

The Shrimad Bhagwat clarifies that whoever desires their overall well-being, must first understand the four Purusharthas\*. These are Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. Fulfillment is thus divided into four areas. Examine why Dharma is needed in your life. Dharma is needed for you to be independent – don’t depend upon anyone, become self-reliant. Total freedom from any kind of slavery is an indication of the presence of Dharma in your life. What are the factors which block our freedom? We are dependent upon sense objects, we are enslaved by our sense organs, our mind controls us, our urges force us, our ego drives us, and we are led astray by faulty understanding. Mukti\* is a state when we are free from all these, and serenely established within our own Self. स्वातन्त्र्यं परमं पदम् “*Swatantryam paramam padam*” - independence gives us the ‘param pada’\*. You must attain the param pada. All the good we do, is with the goal of being free from all types of bonds and slavery.

If you practice Dharma to obtain wealth, that is no benefit – that is a bondage. If you want to know what the fruit of wealth is, the answer is that Dharma is the fruit of wealth. धनात् धर्मः। धर्मस्य धर्मार्थस्य धर्मैकान्तस्य “*Dhanaat dharmam*”, “*dharmasya dharmarthasya, dharmikaantasya.*” If you have wealth, use it in ways which will benefit others and you will get salvation. Your life will be filled with pious activities. The real fruit of wealth is Dharma, not bhog\*. The fruit of Dharma is Moksha, not wealth. Then what is the fruit of bhog? The fruit of bhog is to sustain life. Eat and drink to be



healthy and sustain life. All worldly items are meant to help us live healthy lives, and avoid indulging in our desires, because there is no end to desire.

कामस्य नेन्द्रियप्रीतिर्लाभो जीवेत यावता ।

*Kaamasya ne`ndriyapreetirlaabho jeeve`ta yaavataa.*

We should, therefore, indulge ourselves only to the extent of remaining healthy. Take note of this once again: the purpose of Dharma is Moksha, not wealth. Wealth is to be used for Dharma, not bhog. And, the purpose of bhog is to maintain good health, not overindulgence.

Now, if you ask what life is for, the answer is:

जीवस्य तत्त्वजिज्ञासा नार्थो यश्चेह कर्मभिः ।

*Jeevasya tatvajigyaasaa naartho yashche`ha karmabhih.*

The purpose of life is not to work endlessly. The greatest achievement is to know the ultimate Truth. Knowledge of the Truth is the real fruit of life. Unless you have knowledge about the Truth, you will not even know whether what you say, is true or false. It is like the blind leading the blind, when you talk without actually knowing what the Truth is. Do you really know whether the things you do are punya\* or paapa\*? You cannot discriminate accurately between punya and paapa, unless you have understood the truth of the matter. In the same way, you need to have knowledge about the ultimate Truth, to actually know the truth about heaven, about the Self, and about God. It is only when we begin to speak with honesty, that we begin to lead a life of truth, live righteously; and only then will we attain the ultimate Truth. We are only groping in the dark unless we attain this knowledge. That is why it is so important that we lead truthful, righteous lives.

To blindly accept someone's statement about the ultimate Truth, is not right. Nothing becomes the truth just because someone has heard it from another, or believed it to be so. The Truth is that which is true in the eyes of God. The success of life is in getting a glimpse of that truth. To know what is right in the eyes of God, you must look deep into His eyes, meet his eyes. When your eyes show you what God sees as the Truth, you will understand the ultimate Truth. God is known as God because of His ability to see everything within Himself, by Himself, as Himself. When you develop the ability to see through His eyes, you will recognize the ultimate Truth. Until then, you wander in the darkness of ignorance. You will not really know whether your actions are in keeping with that truth, or not. You will not

know whether what you say, is in keeping with that truth. My dear, one cannot understand these subtle factors so easily. One has to try and grasp the purport of what the Mahatmas have indicated.

Now, examine how the Bhagwat explains the Truth. It is analyzed in the very first chapter:

वदन्ति तत्तत्त्वविदस्तत्त्वं यज्ज्ञानमद्वयम्।

ब्रह्मेति परमात्मेति भगवानिति शब्द्यते ॥ १.२.११

*Vadanti tattatvavidastattvam yajnaamadvayam,  
Brahme`ti paramaatme`ti bhagavaaniti shabdyate` 1.2.11.*

The great ones, who have realized the essence of the Truth, call it the 'tattva'. Satya\* is another name for tattva. The nature of the knowledge about the tattva is that the one who knows has no vanity about having this knowledge, and he does not see anything in the world as separate from God. The fact is that the Knower and that, which is known, are not separate. It is the same one Almighty Lord who appears as everything, as being beyond everything, as being the witness of everything, and is the substratum of all. There is nothing but Him. He is called the Brahman, the Paramatma, and Bhagvan\*. Your life is a success if you have obtained knowledge about Him. This is the success of life. The Bhagwat tells us how we can achieve this success in our lives.

शुश्रूषोः श्रद्धधानस्य वासुदेवकथारुचिः।

स्यान्महत्सेवया विप्राः पुण्यतीर्थनिषेवणात् ॥

शृण्वतां स्वकथां कृष्णः पुण्यश्रवणकीर्तनः।

हृद्यन्तःस्थो ह्यभद्राणि विधुनोति सुहृत्सताम् ॥

नष्टप्रायेष्वभद्रेषु नित्यं भागवतसेवया।

भगवत्युत्तमश्लोके भक्तिर्भवति नौष्ठिकी ॥

तदा रजस्तमोभावा कामलोभादयश्च से।

चेत एतैरनाविद्धं स्थितं सत्त्वे प्रसीदति।

एवं प्रसन्नमनसो भगवद्भक्तियोगतः।

भगवत्तत्त्वविज्ञानं मुक्तसंगस्य जायते ॥

भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिश्छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः।

क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि दृष्ट एवात्मनीश्वरे ॥ १.२.१६-२१

*Shushrooshoh shraddadhaanasya vaasude`vakathaaruchih,*

*Syaanmahatse`vayaa vipraah punyateerthanishe`vanaat.  
Shrunvataam svakathaam krishnah punyashravanakeertanah,  
Hridyantahstho hyabhadraani vidyunoti suhritsataam.  
Nastapraaye`shvabhadre`shu nityam bhaagavatase`vayaa,  
Bhagavatyuttamashloke`bhaktirbhavati naishtthikee.  
Tadaa rajastamobhaavaa kaamalobhaadayashcha ye`,  
Che`ta e`tairanaavidham sthitam sattve`praseedati.  
E`vam prasannamanaso bhagavadbhaktiyogatah,  
Bhagavattattvavigyaanam muktasangasya jaayate`.  
Bhidyate`hridayagranthishchidyante`sarvasanshayaah,  
Ksheeyante`chaasya karmaani drista e`tvaatmaneeshvare`. 1.2.16-21.*

“Go to a holy place. Obtain the company of the Mahatmas living there. Listen to them narrate the episodes of the Lord’s Leela-katha. Have faith in it. When faith enters your heart, and the ears hear the discourses, then you develop a love for the Lord. After this, when your heart sings His glories, you become free of kama\*, krodha\*, lobha\* etc. which propel you into wrongdoing. It is these negative tendencies which prevent us from seeing the Lord seated in our hearts. Kama shows woman or man who is not our spouse; lobha shows wealth, and krodha shows us the enemy. As a result we forget to see our Self, our God, and see only the outer world.

The Bhagwat tells us that rajoguna\* filled with kama, krodha, lobha, etc., and tamoguna\* do not succeed in troubling our heart when Bhakti enters it. That is because our mind becomes established in satya. Our hearts become limpid and joyful with the Lord. Worldly troubles sully our hearts, but our heart is purified when we see the Lord in everyone and in everything. To have a pure heart is the paramount goal. When we view ‘the other’, he enters our heart with all his kama, krodha and lobha. But if we contemplate on the Lord – why, then – the Lord is already within us. We need not go anywhere to seek Him.

Bhakti cleanses our heart. We cannot see the Lord unless our heart is pure. Our heart is filled with all types of knots, which are removed as we understand the essence of the Lord. The knots are the bonds of worldly attachment. We are free to meet people, and interact pleasantly with others, but we should take care not to form any worldly attachments, and should not consider one person to be a foe and another, a friend. In life, a foe becomes a friend and a friend becomes a foe. There is no such rule that a friend will remain a friend, or a foe will remain a foe. The only one to remain unchanged is God, so understand that He alone is your true friend. He is your all in all.

What is this knot of friend and foe? Just as cancer in the body is a physical lump, these mental knots of attachments and aversions are an equally frightening disease. These knots dissolve when we obtain a vision of the Lord. All the sorrows and joys resulting from past actions also fade away. Our doubts and perplexities scatter into oblivion.

Hence, as we mentioned earlier, the Shrimad Bhagwat is an extraordinary work. It teaches you the methods for obtaining wealth, fulfilling desires, undertaking religious activities, as well as how to be free. It teaches you Bhakti, and tells you how you can meet God, how you can immerse yourself in Him. It gives the ultimate, the Pancham (fifth) Purushartha, Bhakti.

Enough for today! Tomorrow we will try to view the Shrimad Bhagwat systematically, so that you can catch a glimpse of its greatness.

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti.

## BHAGWATAMRIT

### Pravarchan II

#### (Skandha I & II & III)

Yudhishtira was crowned King, after the Mahabharata war was won. He felt no joy, however, because his heart was overcome with grief. He reflected that temporal power is transient. The glory of victory was short-lived, but the massive massacre and damage to the world had sullied his heart. He felt that there was nothing he could do, to atone for this, and that he would never be free of the sin of having undertaken this war.

Shri Krishna tried to relieve Yudhishtira of this dejection. He tried to counsel Yudhishtira, after Vyas failed to convince him, but Yudhishtira continued to feel oppressed by remorse. Shri Krishna then suggested that they visit Bhishmapitamah\* who was lying on the bed of arrows.

Note who the Lord gives importance to. Instead of taking the credit by dispelling Yudhishtira's depression, He chose to give the credit to His devotee, and show the world how great His devotees are. That is why the Bhagwat is called the Bhagwat\* Purana.

Now, turn your attention to Bhishmapitamah, lying on his bed of arrows. None of the arrows had entered through his back, because he faced his enemies unflinchingly. The arrows pierced his body from the front and protruded from the back. Bhishmapitamah lay flat on his back, hanging in air, supported by the arrows whose tips were embedded in the ground. His contemplation upon Shri Krishna was unbroken, and because of this he felt no pain.

You see, the Yogis learn the trick for avoiding the sensation of pain. The Vedantis\* hold that despite of the experience of pain, the Knowledge (of the Supreme Reality), being transcendental, remains unaffected by all possible temporal experiences. The person whose heart is filled with loving thoughts of the Lord, however, never suffers. Pain can not abide where the contemplation is on the Lord. युगपज्ज्ञानानुत्पत्तिर्मनसो लिंगम् “Yugapajgyanaanutpattirmanaso lingum” – the mind cannot hold two knowledges simultaneously. All sorrows are forgotten when we think of the Lord – हरिस्मृतिः सर्वविपद्विमोक्षणम् “harismritih sarvavipadavimokshanam”. However, we forget the Lord when we dwell upon our sorrow.

So, Bhishmapitamah was lying on the bed of arrows. He could not rise to greet the Sages and the Lord Shri Krishna, so he welcomed them mentally,

and with great reverence. When Yudhishtira asked him about Dharma, he explained the subtleties of Dharma in detail, with a totally universal viewpoint. The Shanti Parva\* and the Anushasan Parva\* in the Mahabharata, are full of Bhishmapitamah's sermons. He describes the right and wrong for the Varna Dharma\*, Ashrama Dharma\*, Raj Dharma\* and Grihastha Dharma\*. Yudhishtira's dilemma was resolved after he listened to these explanations.

I wish to draw your attention to the unique message which the Bhagwat gives. Other religions do not have this unique clarification. In the Bhagwat, it is said:

वैराग्यरागोपाधिभ्यामाम्नातोभयलक्षणात् ।

*Vairagyaraagopaadhibhayaamaamnaatobhayalakshanaat*

This means that people attached to worldly matters should undertake worship through action, but a life of contemplation is better suited to those who are naturally detached. This shows that our religion is based on the natural mental tendencies of a person, and not upon the virtues of an object or action. Awareness is needed for righteousness; an inert object or an action, are not the main criteria. The dictates of Dharma may vary in accordance to the level of a person's awareness, in order to guide him towards emancipation and realization.

Bhishmapitamah praised the Lord, and said, "You made me wait for so long, before coming to me! Now, You must stand before me, in Your four armed form, wearing Your golden colored garment and crown, and smiling Your bewitching smile, until my spirit leaves my body. You now have to wait until I have left this body of mine."

इति मतिरुपकल्पिता वितृष्णा भगवति सात्वतपुगंवे विभूमि ।

स्वसुखमुपगते क्वचिद्विहर्तुं प्रकृतिमुपेयुषि यद्भवप्रवाहः ॥ १.९.३२

*Iti matirupakalpita vitrishnaa bhagavati saatvatapungave` vibhumni,  
Svasukhamupagate` kvachidvihartum prakritimupe`yushi yadbhavapravaah.  
1.9.32.*

"Lord, I have obtained one thing in life. I have succeeded in emptying my mind of all desires. I have guarded my mind the way one protects one's daughter. Now, at the end of life, I give this mind – like one gives away a daughter – to You. I know fully well that You have no need for my mind,



but I implore You to accept and use it when You please, just as You accept Prakriti\* to create the universe.”

Then Bhishmapitamah began to meditate upon the Lord. He also meditated upon the Gopis, upon the battlefield, and the dust from the horses’ hooves which lay thick upon the Lord’s hair. He meditated upon how Arjuna’s confusion was dispelled, and how the Lord had rushed, with the wheel of the broken chariot, towards Bhishma, to kill him.

Bhishmapitamah said:

स्वनिगममपहाय मत्प्रतिज्ञामृतमधिकर्तुमवप्लुतो रथस्थः ।  
धृतरथचरणोऽभ्ययाच्चलद्गुह्रिरिव हन्तुमिमं गतोत्तरीयः ॥ १.९.३७

*Svanigamamapahaaya matpratigyaamritamadhikartumavapluto rathasthah,  
Dhritarathacharanoabhyayaachchaladgurhaririva hantumimam  
gatottariyah. 1.9.37.*

“Lord, You could not bear to see Your beloved Arjuna unable to bear the brunt of my arrows. You decided, at that moment, to break Your own vow (to not fight), and honor my vow (to make You take up arms). You jumped down from the chariot, took up the wheel of a broken chariot lying there, and rushed to attack me with it. The Earth trembled at the sight. Your golden garment slipped off Your body, and You ran at me with all the ferocity of an attacking tiger!”

Bhishmapitamah’s last meditation is even more remarkable. He says:

तमिममहमजं शरीरभाजां हृदि हृदि धिष्ठितमात्मकल्पितानाम् ।  
प्रतिदृशमिव नैकधार्कमेकं समधिगतोऽस्मि विधूतभेदमोहः ॥ १.९.४२

*Tamimahamajam shareerabhaajaam hridi hridi  
dhisthitamaatmakalpitaanaam,  
Pratidrishamiva naikadhaarkame`kam samadhigatoasmi  
didhootabhe`damohah. 1.9.42.*

“Lord, I am aware that it is You, the unborn Paramatma, who is seated in, and fills the hearts of all. It is actually You, who becomes the different “I”, “I” and “I” of different people. Just as it is one Sun, which shines in everybody’s eyes, in the same way, it is only You who shines in every heart. There is no differentiation between the different creatures, the seemingly separate souls, and the objects in the world. I am becoming free of all illusion, and obtaining an understanding of Your greatness.”

This is followed by a description, सोन्तः श्वास उपारमत् ‘sontah shvaasa uparamat’, meaning that Bhishmapitamah’s spirit did not need to leave his body. His breath remained where it was. The five elements of his body – fire, wind, space, earth and water – dissolved and disintegrated. His soul didn’t have to travel to a different realm of existence.

Dhritarashtra’s mukti\* is described as occurring in a similar manner. Taking the advice of Vidura, he had gone to Haridwar, and there he immersed the five elements of his body into the five elements of Nature. He then immersed the five elements into the Aham\*, the Aham into the Mahat\*, the Mahat into Prakriti, and Prakriti into the Paramatma. Vidura also attained mukti by a similar method.

When Yudhishtira heard from Arjuna, upon his return from Dwarka, that Shri Krishna had departed from this world, he accepted ‘veer sannyas’\*, and went on to attain heaven.

But Arjuna, who had heard the Gita, could contain neither his anguish, nor his tears. The Bhagwat describes this beautifully. It is said that the pain of separation was so acute, and Arjuna wept so profusely, that all worldly attachments and considerations were washed away. The Knowledge of the Gita, as told by Shri Krishna, shone in Arjuna’s heart again. It had, for some time, become dimmed because of Arjuna’s involvement in worldly activities, and the three gunas\* which fluctuate in everybody. However, when the Bhakti of the Lord flowed into Arjuna’s heart, he became free of sorrow. He felt one with the Brahman, free of all dualities, immersed in Prakriti, free of the gunas, and liberated from the cycles of birth and death.

This is how the Bhagwat describes it:

गीतं भगवता ज्ञानं यत्तत् संग्राममूर्धनि ।

कालकर्मतमोरुद्धं पुनरध्यागमद् विभुः ॥

विशोको ब्रह्मसम्पत्त्या संछिन्नद्वैतसंशयः ।

लीनप्रकृतिर्नैर्गुण्यादलिंगत्वादसम्भवः ॥ १.१५.३०-३१

*Geetam bhagavataa gnaanam yattat sangraamamoordhani,*

*Kaalakarmatamoruddham punaradhyaagamad vibhuh.*

*Vishoko brahmasampattyaa sanchinnadvaitasanshayah,*

*Leenaprakritinairgunyaadalingatvaasambhavah. 1.15.30-31.*

This way, all Parikshit’s forefathers obtained mukti. They were all Graced by the Lord; they were all His devotees. Their hearts and lives were filled with the Lord Shri Krishna. The truth of the matter is that worldliness vanishes when the Lord is present; and where the Lord is not present, there is rebirth and death, and there is a tussle between attachments and aversions. Attachment binds us with partiality, and aversion binds us with cruelty. So,

we need to meditate upon the lotus-feet of the Lord, in order to rid our hearts of the demons Madhu-Kaitabh.

At the request of Kunti, Shri Krishna had stayed back at Hastinapur, before returning to Dwarka. At Dwarka, He met all the old and young who had gathered to welcome Him. He bowed down to some, touched the feet of some with reverence, shook hands and smiled at others, and chatted with a few. He comforted everybody and gave them all they needed. Only then did Shri Krishna enter the city of Dwarka. This is an example which shows the oneness He felt with everybody.

The Lord Shri Krishna knew about Parikshit's birth and background in advance. He knew that Parikshit was to be cursed for insulting a Mahatma. That is why He protected the unborn Parikshit in Uttara's womb.

The unborn Parikshit had not called out to Shri Krishna to protect him. It is the nature of the Lord to protect the helpless. To protect even those – like Parikshita, Kubja, Putana, and others – who had not strived to attain Him. His protection is always there for Mahatmas and for all those who worship Him. It would have been easy for the Lord to save Parikshit from the curse given by the Brahmin's son, but He wasn't thinking only about saving Parikshit. Shri Krishna wanted to save all His children, and so He manifested in the form of the Shrimad Bhagwat.

Now, see the qualities of Shukadevaji Maharaj. He is blissfully immersed in love for the Lord, despite being परिनिष्ठितोऽपि नैर्गुण्ये *parinishthitoapi nairgunye* - committed to remaining free of the three gunas. He comes from the clans of the worshippers of Shiva, as well as the worshippers of Vishnu. The Kaushitki Samhita contains a description of Shri Shankarji\* narrating the Shrimad Bhagwat to Gauriji. The dead egg of a parrot, which lay close by, came alive with the sound of the words of the Shrimad Bhagwat. It was as though the mritsanjeevani vidya\* had been used upon it. Thus, the Shrimad Bhagwat becomes a tantra\* spoken by Shiva, a holy book of the Shaivas\*, and Shri Shukadevaji Maharaj becomes its preacher.

Apart from this, Shri Shukadevaji Maharaj remained in his mother's womb for several years, before taking birth. His devotion to the feet of the Lord was total and unbroken, even though he was blissfully established within his Self, and had no worldly attachments. It could be said that Shri Shukadevaji did not become a lover of the Lord, but the Lord loved Shukadevji, and appeared as Shukadevji, when King Parikshit was threatened with the deadly snake-bite, तत्राभवद्भवान् व्यासपुत्रः *tattraabhavadbhavaan vyasaputrah*.

Nobody knew Shukadevaji before he appeared at Parikshit's gathering of sages. Immature youngsters would run after him, trying to tease him. They ran off, however, when they saw how highly the great men respected Shri

Shukadevji.

Having welcomed Shri Shukadevaji, King Parikshit placed his questions before him. “Oh noblest of Munis, please enlighten me about the main duties of a person, during his life and at the time of death. What should he do, and what should he not do? What should he say and what should he not say? What should he think and what should he not think? Please Grace me by answering all my questions in detail.”

Now, the second Skandha begins with Shri Shukadevaji Maharaj’s answer. He was pleased with the questions asked by King Parikshit. He said, “Parikshit, your questions are not only for yourself – they are for the benefit of all.

वरीयानेष ते प्रश्नः कृतो लोकहितं नृप। २.१.१

*Vareeyane`sha te` prashnah krito lokahitam nripa. 2.1.1.*

You see, King, life is shortened with every passing moment. No one can depend upon the body. Still, it is given to us for a very short duration, and we must make the best use of it. All great people have emphasized upon the need to purify the mind. Even animals do not speak, do anything, or indulge themselves thoughtlessly. How can a person totally lacking in self control, be considered a human being?

Parikshit, a man can attain great spiritual heights, even in a short time. This is why Mahatmas love to hear about the wonderful qualities of the Lord, even when their object of worship is the Nirguna\* form of the Lord, and they are not bound by any religious norms.

Life should be filled with a feeling of wholeness. Feelings of parichinnata\* are not desirable, because separateness is an illusion. All the tenets of traditional sects and casts, involve outlooks of separation. Some get caught in family attachment, some in loyalty to the town, State, or nation. Man’s viewpoint should be vast enough to include all humanity, all creatures, and the whole universe. Only the Lord is like this. Hence, the highest duty of a human being is to make the Lord our goal.”

तस्मात् सर्वात्मना राजन् हरिः सर्वत्र सर्वदा।

श्रोतव्यः कीर्तितव्यश्च स्मर्तव्यो भगवान्नृणाम्। २.२.३६

*Tasmaat sarvaatmanaa raajan harih sarvatra sarvadaa,*

*Shrotavyah kiritiavyashcha smartavyo bhagavannrinaam. 2.2.36.*

This indicates that if you wish to be totally free of fear, then listen to talks about the Lord who abides in all, sing His glories, and remember Him at all times.

When we see something, but do not know what it is, the words enlighten us. It is the same with things which are far away in place or time. Therefore, nobody can know about God unless they hear about Him. We cannot know Him through our eyes or nose. Then, how can we know about God? Through our ears – when we hear about the experiences of the great souls, when we listen to the explanations of the Vedas and the Shrutis\* – only then can we begin to know about the Lord. Shravan\* is the main method to learn about the Lord. The Lord will not enter your heart unless and until you undertake shravan, manan\*, and nididhyasan\*.

Ten chapters in the second Skandha give a detailed description about the Lord and the aspects and methods for reaching Him. You must listen to the Vedas, and other scriptures based on the philosophy of the Vedas. You must listen to descriptions about how the Lord behaved, when He descended on earth. Listen to the great souls describe all this, if possible. If not, find someone and tell him what you know about the Lord. Incase you can't find either, sing His glories out loud. And, if even that is not possible, just hum His name to yourself. You feel joyful when you remember the Lord, and then you stop depending upon any external factor to bring you happiness.

It is not proper to think that you will be happy when you get a particular object, person or situation. The font of joy is in your heart. It will gush forth, if you begin to listen to, sing about, or remember the Lord. The Ganga of happiness flows in your heart; the ocean of bliss heaves in your heart, and springs of joy bubble in your heart. You do not experience them because you have blocked the source. To open this blockage, you need shravan, smaran\*, and kirtan\*. The Lord explains that this is the only way to reach Him.

There are many aspects of shravan. One is to contemplate on the Lord, instead of any person. God can be seen in Prakriti. He gives us satya buddhi\*. The ahankara\* rises from satya buddhi, and the five tanmatras\* arise from the ahankara, followed by panchabhoot\*. Hundreds of thousands of universes are created from the five elements, containing hundreds of thousands of beings, humans, animals, birds, demigods, Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh – all are individuals, no bigger than grains of dust in the front of the Lord. The entire universe – including our body – appears within the Lord and gets immersed in Him. When we think on these lines, we forget all thoughts of friend and foe. We forget “mine” and “thine”, and begin to glimpse the essence of the Lord in everybody and everything.

स सर्वधीवृत्त्यनुभूतसर्व आत्मा यथा स्वप्नजनेक्षितैकः। २.१.३९

*Sa sarvadheevritt्यानubhootasarva aatmaa yathaa svapnajane`kshitaikah.*  
2.1.39.

The world seen in our dreams appears and vanishes by itself, and within itself. In the same way, the world we see when awake, appears in the Paramatma, our Atman. There is none who is ‘mine’ or ‘thine’, or to be desired or rejected. We should meditate upon the Lord to purify our mind.

The Shrimad Bhagwat tells us that we are free to meditate upon different demigods, for the fulfillment of our desires. What one desires may be achieved by this method. However, if you meditate upon the Lord, who is everything, you will attain God, who is the all in all.

This perspective of the Bhagwat is unique. It is not the property of any single race or country. It is for all the children of the Lord. You will notice that even trees, birds, vines, rivers, and everything in the Bhagwat is a Bhakta. In the Bhagwat, the earth thrills, and lotuses blossom, and rivers stop flowing, because the whole world is enmeshed in love and devotion for the Lord. There is nothing that can be considered to be bad. Evil enters our heart and sullies it, whenever we see evil in anything. We should, instead, focus on the essence, and adopt the methods of anvay-vyatirek\* to understand the fact that there is nothing but the Lord. He is birth, He is death, He is disease, and He is health. He is parting, He is meeting. He is all that is. Meditating in this way, the shravan will be established in your heart. Meditate upon the Lord even if your heart is filled with worldly desires.

अकामः सर्वकामो वा मोक्षकाम उदारधीः।

तीव्रेण भक्तियोगेन यजेत पुरुषं परम्॥ २.३.१०

*Akaamah sarvakaamo vaa mokshakaama udaaradhih,*  
*Teevre`na bhaktiyoge`na yaje`ta purusham param. 2.3.10.*

Your heart must be filled with bhakti. It does not matter whether your heart is free of desires, or filled with them. The moment the Lord enters your heart, you will experience total fulfillment, and His self-effulgence will be revealed by itself.

The worldly factors which appear to be very important are really not at all important. Only the Lord is important. Meditate upon His beauty – your mind will become pure. If you wish to attain krama mukti\*, and go first to Brahmalo\* , you can do so. If you wish to become a Bhakta in this life, you will obtain sadyo mukti\*. The paths of both krama mukti and sadyo mukti are described in the Bhagwat.

Even those who go to BrahmaloK experience sorrow. The reason is the people there can see the earth, and see how people on earth suffer due to greed, even though there is no such thing as sorrow in God's creation. People are deluded into thinking that they are unhappy.

यच्चित्ततोऽदः कृपयानिदंविदां दुरन्तदुःखप्रभावनुदर्शनात् । २.२.२७

*Yacchittatodah*

*kripayaanidamvidaam*

*durantadukhaprabhaavanudarshanaat. 2.2.27.*

Worldly people are unhappy because they do not know the Truth, do not understand the Truth, and are caught in the wheel of worldly considerations.

शोकस्थानसहस्राणि भयस्थानशतानि च ।

दिवसे-दिवसे मूढमाविशन्ति न पण्डितम् ।।

स्वर्गारोहण पर्व ५.६१

*Shokasthaanasahasraani bhayasthaanashataani cha,*

*Divase`-divase` moodhamaavishanti na panditam.*

*Mahabharat, Svargarohan Parva.5.61.*

It is a sign of foolishness – not wisdom – to fluctuate between fear and sorrow umpteen times a day. Fear and sorrow are routine visitors in this world. We shouldn't permit them to affect us.

As mentioned earlier, when someone goes to BrahmaloK, and sees the unhappy people on earth, he begins to feel that it was not right to seek only his own salvation. So, he returns to the earth and becomes one with it. He identifies with all the world's joys and sorrows. He identifies first with the inert elements – fire, wind, space and the entire Prakriti – and finally, with the Paramatma Himself.

This is the method of the Shrimad Bhagwat. A devotee in the Bhagwat asked for a boon.

“Lord, grant that I abide in everybody's heart.”

The Lord said, “I am already seated in the hearts of all. What will you do there?”

“Lord, You merely witness the sorrows in people's hearts.”

The Lord said, “My dear, every individual experiences the joy and sorrow due to him. What work have you, there?”

The devotee pleaded, “Lord, Your witnessing will not be disturbed by my presence. I want only that all the sorrows come to me, and the people experience only happiness. I am ready to accept all the suffering of all the creatures in the world. Let people's sorrows be granted to me, and let no

person have sorrow, and may all this be in You – अन्तःस्थितो ये भवन्त्यदुःखाः  
*antahsthitō ye`bhavantyadukhaah.*”

The Lord laughed with joy to hear the words of His devotee. He thought to Himself, “How magnanimous My devotee is! He has feelings of such beauty!” This is the kind of feeling a Bhakta should have. No Bhakta should harbor feelings of differentiation or separateness.

This is the way that the mukatas and the Bhaktas are described in the Bhagwat.

The first two chapters of the second Skandha describe the subject of dhyān\*. The next two chapters describe the hridaya prasad\*, and the following six chapters are about the mind. Hridaya prasad means a joyful mind which also has humility. A person whose life lacks humility is called an egoist, and his ego receives blow after blow. It is always the rigid, which breaks. The teeth break with age, but the tongue endures. The one who is soft and gentle is the one that endures, but those who are rigid and hard, are broken by repeated blows.

So, all those who speak of, and hear the Bhagwat – like Suta-Shaunak, and Shukadeva-Parikshit – have humility and bhakti, and they praise the Lord. The one who sees the world becomes attached, the one who sees ‘I’ becomes an egoist, but the one who sees God finds that his world and his ‘I’, simply evaporate. Don’t think that the world means bricks and stones. The world is composed of ‘I’ and ‘mine’, of mamata\* and moha\*. I did this, I did that, I obtained this pleasure, I suffered – all this is the world.

So, the chain of joys and sorrows, and the snares of ‘me’ and ‘mine’, are all destroyed when we begin to love the Lord. Egoism comes to an end. You get attached when you see the world. Looking at yourself gives rise to vanity. When you contemplate on the Lord, this world and your ego will both appear to be a part of Him.

This is why Sutaji and Shukadevaji first do the mangala charan\*, and then describe the Lord. Shaunakji and Parikshit’s questions are filled with love and devotion for the Lord. The Bhagwat’s descriptions of the Lord are unparalleled, not to be found elsewhere. Shri Shukadevaji Maharaj says:

किरातहूणान्ध्रपुलिन्दपुल्कसा आभीरकङ्का यवनाः खसादयः।

येऽन्ये च पापा यदुपाश्रयाश्रयाः शुध्यन्ति तस्मै प्रभविष्णवे नमः॥ २.४.१८

*Kirata-hoonandhra-pulinda-pulkasaa aabheerakankaa yavanaah  
khasaadayah,*

*Ye`anye` cha paapaa yadupaashrayaashrayaah shudhyanti tasmai  
prabhavishnave`namah. 2.4.18.*



Actually, the pure person is one whose very memory is enough to purify the impure, to uplift the fallen, to bring forward those who lag behind, and raise them to greater heights. By meditating upon the Lord, and by surrendering to Him, the Kirat\*, Hoon\*, Andhra\*, Pulinda\* and Pulkas – meaning butchers – all became purified. That is why Shri Shukadevaji Maharaj prostrates before the Lord and prays, “Lord, come, be seated upon my speech and make it beautiful - सोऽलंकृषीष्ट भगवान् वचांसि मे *solankrisheeshta bhagavaan vachaansi me`* - Lord, my speech is like the Garuda, who carries You (through the ears) into the hearts of people.”

Sutaji has stated, with absolute clarity that our ears are the only opening for the Lord to enter through. Just as all the water bodies become lucid when autumn comes; our hearts are cleansed as soon as the Lord enters.

प्रविष्टः कर्णरन्ध्रेण स्वानां भावसरोरुहम्।

धुनोति शमलं कृष्णं सलिलस्य यथा शरत्॥ २.८.५

*Pravishatah karnarandhre`na svaanaam bhaavasaroruham,*

*Dhunoti shamalam krishnam salilasya yathaa sharat. 2.8.5*

I give a fascinating example, in this context. A gentleman went to meet his friend. The door was locked from within. Troubled by a total lack of response to all his knocks and calls, he entered through an open window. His friend lay unconscious on the bed. The floor had not been swept for days. There was no food in the house. Hastily, he gave his friend a sponge, changed his clothes, arranged for medicine and food, and cleaned the house. His friend was restored to good health.

“How did you come in?” asked the friend. “I had not informed you of my illness, nor sent any invitation.”

“I do not need any formal invitation from you,” replied the gentleman affectionately. “I entered through the open window, when you didn’t open the door.”

God behaves in a similar way. He slips in, like a masked man entering someone’s house stealthily, coming into our hearts through the ears, and then he removes all our faults.

For shravan\* we need tattvagnan\*. Secondly, we need niyama\*, thirdly, we need a pure heart, and then we need to praise the Lord. We have to accept that there is none greater than Him, and meditate upon His greatness, sing His glories, and listen to discourses upon Him. All these activities help to purify our heart.

The fifth requirement for shravan is manan. Shravan is achieved only when we undertake manan with a heart which has been purified by meditating upon the essence of the Lord.

Manan can be undertaken by two methods – through utpatti\* and through upapatti\*. With reference to utpatti, Naradji tells Brahmaji, “Father, as far as I can understand, you are the greatest in all creation. Then, who do you meditate upon? Is there someone who is even greater than you, for you to meditate upon?”

Brahmaji smiled when he heard Naradji’s words. He said, “My son, you don’t know it yet, but there is someone greater than me, greater than my creation, greater than all the millions of worlds in the universe, and greater even than Prakriti. We are born of That.”

Having said this, Brahmaji began to describe the chronological detail of utpatti. The Lord uses Maya – which is the illusion which makes worldly interaction possible – for creating this world. Maya projects the existence of something (the world), where nothing exists. It hides the existing Reality, from our understanding. It is like a conjuror, an illusionist. Maya causes the illusion of the world.

But for Maya, it is not possible for Creation to be seen in the non-dual, eternal Self. However, devotional people hold that Maya is the Achintya Shakti (unthinkable power) of the Lord, while in the Vedantic viewpoint, it is purely an illusion, due to an identification of the Self with the body (non-self). To explain this logically, people say that Maya is adhyaropit\* upon the Lord. However, whether you consider it adhyaropit, or the achintya Shakti, this world around us is nothing but the Maya of the Lord; it is His magic show.

Birth is only for the anitya\*. This world comes and goes. It dies, because it is born and is subject to change. The Soul, however, is nitya.”

Nobody in this world – however smart he may be – can claim to have experienced the lack of his own existence. There has never been, nor will there ever be, such a person. This is not a material science which may yield new discoveries in future. This belongs to the field of experience. It is an established fact that the experience, ‘I do not exist’ is impossible. Anything – even knowledge itself – is known only by the awareness of its existence. Even sleep, or samaadhi\*, or pralay\* can be known only if one is aware about what happens. So much so, that one has to be aware that he has forgotten something!

Now, pay attention to this point – from where do the four directions – North, South, East and West – begin? Can you tell me what lies to the East of East, or the West of West? No one can say where the East and West end. Does

anyone know where up and down begin and end? The fact is that nobody knows the beginning or the end of North, South, East, West, up or down.

Adhyatma\*, however, has the answer. It says that North, South, East, West, up and down, all begin where your 'I' is. If you try to seek it elsewhere, you will fail. You will only find agnan\*, and you will drown in the darkness. So, you see, you need not go anywhere outside to locate the four directions, above or below, or their history – you will find it all where your 'I' is. That is where the world begins and that is where eternity abides; and within your 'I' abides the Paramatma, who is nothing but Knowledge itself. What need is there, then, for you to wander in the dark?

If you ask, "How can the world be created by me? I am the sakshi\*. I am knowledge. How can these create?"

The answer is that the world is not made this way – it is created by Maya. For as long as you see the world, you will have to imagine its cause.

A chronological description of how the world began is given in the Bhagwat, followed by a description of the birth of the Lord. Only the anitya can be born. The nitya and parichinna\* soul unites with the transient, and the entire world – srishti – is avirbhoot\* by Maya, upon the nitya, aparichinna Lord. The fifth, sixth and seventh chapters describe the birth of creation like this. The world, created first by Maya, then the individual soul's uniting with the everlasting, and finally the description of the descent of the Lord.

After this, the next three chapters of the second skandha describe the upapatti aspect of the Lord. Mukti is another name for upapatti. When we were small, we'd hear that Brahma arose from the naval of the Lord. We'd imagine that God would be having a naval like ours. We'd imagine Him sleeping somewhere, and then a lotus arising from His naval, and blossoming, and Brahma emerging from within the lotus. The purport of the Vedas, however, is that the entire space which envelopes all the planets, is God's naval – nabhi. Nabha means the space. Then, how vast would the Lord be, whose naval is the vast sky? A lotus – a flower-like formation in the space, and Brahmaji was created. But, not just one Brahma. There are millions of Brahma, Vishnu and Rudras, within the form of the Paramatma.

Then, when one lotus bloomed in the naval of the infinite Narayana\*, and Brahmaji appeared from within the flower, he tried to see the four directions. He acquired four heads. He began to think, "Nothing seems to exist, except me. Then, who is it, from whom I am created?" He tried to find out, but couldn't find the cause within himself, nor outside. Truly – how can anyone know how his father is born? Brahmaji tried very hard, but could discover nothing.

After a while, when Brahma became desperate to know who created him, he heard an akashvani\* saying “Tapa, tapa, tapa.” ‘Ta’ is the sixteenth and ‘pa’ is the twenty-first letter in the Sanskrit alphabet. Brahmaji heard these two syllables. He contemplated, and came to the conclusion that Narayana – the tattva which is all-pervading, which is the Paramatma – is nowhere else but here. Then, right there, he had a vision of the Lord. Pleased with Brahmaji, the Lord said, “Brahmaji, you have done a lot of tapa. You may ask for any boon.”

Note this, the Antahkaran\* has four types of tendencies. If you wish to see the form of the Divine, you must first experience the inclinations of the mind. We set out to see the world outside, but we are not able to see what lies in our hearts! How can we recognize without, what we fail to recognize within? We are not aware of even our own self!

Begin to recognize your self. The color of Brahmaji is red. Being the Creator, he has a predominance of ‘raja’\*. Creation, however, cannot be achieved without the requisite knowledge – gnan, so Brahmaji’s mount is a swan – hansa – symbolizing vivek\*. His four mouths voice the four Vedas. The impulses of his Antahkaran are the sankalpa mana\*, vikalpa chitta\*, nityaroopa buddhi\*, and the ahankaaroopa ahankar\*. Brahmaji uses all these for creating the world.

Pleased with Brahmaji, the Lord granted him His vision, and touched his hand – करे स्पर्शन् *kare`sprishan* - Brahmaji bowed down to the Lord and said, “Lord, I desire to obtain the tattvavignaan\*.” At this, the Lord recited the Chatushloki Bhagwat\*, giving the gist of the entire Bhagwat in just four verses. A pure mind is necessary to enter into the meaning of this précis, so Brahmaji undertook tapa, attained the vision of the Lord, and grasped the meaning of the Lord’s words.

I draw your attention to a straightforward formula. Try to match whatever you see, with the way the Lord would view it. Then try to gauge whether your viewpoint is right in the eyes of God. Think for a moment – is your viewpoint more authentic than God’s? Our little human eyes cannot see beyond a furlong or two, cannot see the miniscule microbes. How can we trust them to show the actual, entire picture? Why doesn’t it strike you that only the Lord can see the whole picture and know the true reality?

Who has seen the beginning of That, which has no East-West, no North-South, no up or down, and no past or future? Who has seen the end of time? The present turns into the past, and the future turns into the present. As explained earlier, the end of time is where ‘I’ is, and that is also where the Paramatma is. Had the Lord not been there, your intellect could never have

known the boundaries of time and space. You can only know the real nature of the world when you view it through the eyes of the Lord, and begin to identify with Him. At present, you consider someone as yours, and others as alien; some, your friends and some, your foes; some to be good and some to be bad. You will truly know the truth about the world when you see everything the way God sees it. The Lord says to Brahmaji:

अहमेवासमेवाग्रे नान्यद् यत् सदसत् परम्।  
पश्चादहं सदेतच्च योऽवशिष्येत सोऽस्म्यहम्॥

*Ahame`vaasame`vaagre`naanyad yat sadasat param,  
Paschaadaham yade`tancha yoavashishye`ta sosmyaham.*

“I existed before the world was created; only I exist, and only I will remain. Time is only an imagined factor within Me, caused by your identifying yourself with your body. I remain unchanging. There is nothing but Me – nothing gross, nothing subtle, nothing animate, nothing inanimate. It is all Me. I am before you, I am after you, and all you see is Me alone. I am the ultimate being. There is no other reality but My Self.

It is Maya, who shows us things which don't exist, and hides what does exist – यथाऽभासो यथा तमः *yathaabhaaso yathaa tamah*. All these figures – the humans, animals, birds, trees, creepers – are made from the five elements. The earth contains water, water contains fire, fire contains wind, and the wind contains the space. When we are still, we sit unmoving within the sky. When we run, we cause the air to move, and the heat created in our body causes us to perspire, and the perspiration turns into earth when it dries. The entire universe appears within the five elements, and the larger beings are established in the smaller ones. The sky supports the wind, the wind supports the fire, and the fire supports brightness. In the same way, I permeate the entire creation, and nothing exists but Me.”

एतावदेव जिज्ञास्यं तत्त्वजिज्ञासुनाऽऽत्मनः।

अन्वयव्यतिरेकाभ्यां यत् स्यात् सर्वत्र सर्वदा॥ २.९.३५

*E`taavade`va jigyaasyam tatvajigyaasunaatmanah,  
Anvayavyatire`kaabhyaam yat syaat sarvatra sarvadaa.*  
2. 9.35.

Now, this is not about people who are interested only in worldly pleasures like food, and clothes, and status, and authority. Those who worry about the depletion of wealth, or health, or death, and are completely unconcerned about the ultimate Truth, are living the life of delusion.

We are talking about a jigyasu\*, who desires to know what the ultimate Truth is. We are talking about one filled with agony, that despite having had a good life, and being intelligent, he has not discovered the Truth. For the sake of such idealistic persons, the Lord makes Brahmaji the medium, and said, “Know That, which exists at all times, in all places, and in every form. Know That, which enables you to know everything, and which is known even in the absence of everything. When you get this knowledge, you will see That is one with your Atman, and then and there you will realize the Truth.”

The Lord thus used the Chatushloki Bhagwat – making Brahmaji His instrument – to explain to all future aspirants about His endlessness, about the play of His Maya, about how Creation was made, and the ultimate Knowledge about the world and the people in it.

There is also a Chatushloki Mahabharata\*, just like the Chatushloki Bhagwat. It is called the Gayatri\* or Savitri of the Mahabharata. It explains the purport of the Mahabharata as lucidly as the Chatushloki Bhagwat explains the Bhagwat.

In the last tenth chapter of the second Skandha, Shri Shukadevji tells Parikshit that the Shrimad Bhagwat Mahapurana describes the Lord by raising ten points. What are they? One is, how was this world created? The second is, how were the different species made, when all creatures are formed out of the same tattva and the same panchabhootas? The third point is, how is the world upheld, and where? The fourth question is, who provides the life sustaining water when the earth dries up? The fifth, what are the different desires which arise in people’s minds? The sixth is, how is Time divided? The seventh is, what is the nature of the Bhaktas? The eighth is, how does one control the mind, to love the Lord? The ninth is, what is Mukti? And, the tenth is, what is the nature of That, which upholds all else? The Shrimad Bhagwat uses these ten questions, to explain the one tattva, the one Paramatma, in detail.

So far, we have covered the first two Skandhas of the Bhagwat. The first Skandha describes the speakers and listeners of the Bhagwat – Suta-Shaunak; Narad-Vyas; Shukadevaji-Parikshit. The second Skandha established that Shravan is the most effective method to attain the Lord, and different aspects of Shravan are described.

Now, listen to what the third Skandha has to say. It contains thirty three chapters, and describes the Lord through visarga\*. Visarga means the variety in creation. The affect of the changing balances of the three gunas, within the light of the Brahman, causes all the variety seen in this world, and this is called Visarga.

The Bhagwat uses this word – visarga – in a unique way. In the Gita, you read about two types of bhootasargas\*. One is the ‘daiva sarga’\* and the other is the ‘asura sarga’\*.

द्वौ भूतसर्गौ लोकेऽस्मिन् दैव आसुर एव च।

*Dvau bhootasargo loke`smi daiva aasura e`va cha.*

In the third Skandha, the first nineteen chapters describe the asura visarga, and the remaining fourteen chapters describe the daiva sarga. Within the demonic creation come Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu, and in the Godly creation come the lineages of Manu-Shataroopa, Kardam-Devhuti, and Kashyap-Aditi.

Now I will tell you a little about the background. The period is when the clans of the Kauravas and the Pandavas were preparing for the Mahabharata war. Dhritarashtra could not sleep at night, as he feared that both clans may be destroyed in the war. He summoned Vidura, and asked his advice about what should be done.

Dhritarashtra’s name was most appropriate. He held on to temporal power with all his might. He had no thought for the Lord; all his thoughts were about the world around him. He was blind, in every sense of the word, because the Lord was nowhere, even in his mind’s eye! He held on only to the earthly factors, so he was Dhritarashtra.

On the other hand, Vidura was the personification of gnan. He was Dramaraj\* incarnate. You must have heard of the incident, when the Lord Shri Krishna came to Hastinapur, as the emissary of the Pandavas. Duryodhan had prepared his own palace with lavish furnishings and kept expensive gifts – including jewels – ready, to welcome the Lord. He prayed to the Lord, to accept his hospitality and refresh Himself.

The Lord Shri Krishna told Duryodhan, “I always go to the homes of those who offer food lovingly. If I am very hungry, I even go and ask people to give Me food. You, however, have no love for Me, and I have no appetite at present. So, I will neither go to your house, nor will I eat a meal with you.”

सप्रीति भोज्यान्यन्यानि आपद्भोज्यानि वा पुनः।

न च त्वं प्रीयसे राजन् न चैवापद्गतोह्यहम्॥

महाभारत

*Sapreeti bhojyaanyanyaani aapadobhojyani va punah,  
Na cha tvam preeyase`rajan na chaivaapadgatohyaham.  
Mahabharata,*

Then the Lord Shri Krishna went, uninvited, to Vidura’s house.

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj told Parikshit, right at the beginning of the third Skandha of the Bhagwat, that the Lord considered Vidura's house His own. So, He rejected Duryodhan's invitation and went there instead.

पौरवेन्द्रगृहं हित्वा प्रविवेशात्मसात्कृतम्। ३.१.२.

*Paurave`ndragriham hitvaa pravive`shaatmasaatkritam. 3.1.2.*

It was the same Viduraji, who explained the principles of justice, truth and impartiality to Dhritarashtra, and rebuked him for the difference in his attitude towards the Pandavas and his own sons. "The Kaliyuga has entered your home, in the guise of Duryodhan," Vidura told Dhritarashtra. "He has come to destroy your clan."

Duryodhan was furious when he heard of what Vidura had said about him, to his father. At this, Viduraji then left his bow and arrows at Dhritarashtra's doorstep, to make it clear that he was not going to the Pandava's side, and left the city to go on a pilgrimage. After visiting a number of holy places, he reached the banks of the Yamuna, where he met Uddhavji. He enquired whether all was well at Dwarka.

By then, the Lord Shri Krishna had departed from this world. Uddhavji was the only one to survive, in the clan of Yaduvanshis. When Viduraji asked about Shri Krishna, Uddhavji went into a trance. Tears flowed from his eyes and his body tingled with ecstasy and love for the Lord.

You must have heard that Uddhavji used to worship Shri Krishna, when he was only five years old. When called for his meals, he would tell his mother that he would come when he had finished his puja. Now, that same Uddhavji was parted forever, from his beloved Shri Krishna. Uddhavji was wise and learned, and knew many secrets of the human mind. He also knew the essence of the Lord, and Vidura's question reminded him of Shri Krishna, and he was transported into an ecstatic trance.

After a while, Uddhavji emerged from his trance and began to answer. He said, "Viduraji, neither Devaki-Vasudeva, nor Pradyumna-Aniruddha survived. The Lord's Maya ensures that whatever rises in this world has to descend. This is the pattern. And, whatever is gathered, gets scattered, and we have to part from those we meet. I came away, after seeing all this and hearing the Lord's sermon. I plan to walk along the banks of the Yamuna, up to the banks of the Ganga and then right up to Badrinath. I will stay there, worshipping the Lord, and do whatever He commands. These are His instructions to me, for the time being."



Viduraji requested him for the gnan he had received from Shri Krishna, in His last sermon. Uddhavji said, “Viduraji, the Lord remembered you, as He left the earth.”

Viduraji was overwhelmed to hear this. He felt deeply grateful for this Grace, of being remembered by the Lord, at the time of His departure. Uddhavji said, “Viduraji, the Lord Shri Krishna has instructed that you are to go and meet Maitreyaji. Meitreyaji and I had listened together, when the Lord spoke His last words. Having said everything He wanted to tell us, the Lord told Maitreyaji to give this Gnan to you, when he meets you.”

Then Viduraji went to the banks of the Ganga. Parikshit asked Shri Shukadevji, “Sir, how is it that Uddhavji escaped the mass destruction of the Yaduvanshis\*? Even the Lord, who manipulates the strings of Maya (who uses the three gunas to make the whole world dance), left His form and left for the realm where He abides.”

“Parikshit”, replied Shri Shukadevji, “After accomplishing His designated task of ‘using a thorn to remove a thorn’ the Lord decided that the time had come for Him to give up His Yaduvanshi body. He was thinking about how best to retain the Knowledge for posterity, and remembered Uddhavji. He said,

नोद्धवोऽण्वपि मन्त्रयूनो यद्गुणैर्नादितः प्रभुः । ३.४.३१

“*Noddhavonvapi mannyoono yadgunairnaarditah prabhuh*”. 3.4.31

Worldly temptations overcome everybody, and crush every noble instinct. Chetan\* is crushed under worldly considerations. Think for yourself – when you sit on a chair, is it you who is seated on the chair, or is the chair actually sitting on you? Introspection will reveal that it is the chair (position) which rules your mind and heart, even though your body is seated upon the chair. That is why you cannot overcome worldly considerations. They overcome your judgment, your higher self.

That is why Shri Krishna thought, “Uddhavji is absolutely like Me in every way. He never allowed worldly considerations to conquer his better self. He is best suited to meditate upon Me and contain My knowledge. He should, therefore, remain in this world when I depart.”

The third chapter of the third Skandh of the Bhagwat describes how Shri Krishna had become emotionally detached from the golden city of Dwarka, from all its luxuries and riches, and even from His Queens – who were the personification of perfection. Uddhavji speaks of this:

तस्यैवं रममाणस्य संवत्सरगणान् बहून् ।

गृहमेधेषु योगेषु विरागः समजायत ॥ ३.३.२२.

*Tasyaivam ramamaanasya samvatsaraganaan bahoon,  
Grihame`dhe`shu yoge`shu viraagah samajaayata.3.3.22.*

What was the reason for the Lord's detachment? His wives had begun to quarrel amongst themselves. Even Balaramaji had begun to disagree with Him. His children and grandchildren were undisciplined and disobedient. They would eat, drink, and do everything Shri Krishna disapproved of. They would quarrel amongst themselves. They had become so out of hand that they would even threaten Shri Krishna physically.

Shri Krishna reflected that He had shown the world His love, and it was time to show the world His detachment. God's life contains everything – attachment-detachment, righteousness-unrighteousness, knowledge-nescience, and also joy and sorrow. So, He revealed His detachment and bestowed the Knowledge upon Uddhavji, and departed from the world.

Bidding farewell to Uddhavji, Viduraji went down the banks of the Ganga. He met Maitreyaji, who is described as मैत्रेयमासीनमगाधबोधम् '*maitre`yamaaseenamagaadhabodham*', the personification of boundless knowledge. Viduraji imbued the goodness of Maitreyaji, and asked, "Revered Sir, people work in order to be happy – सुखाय कर्माणि करोति लोकः *sukhaaya karmaani karoti lokah* – everybody desires happiness. But, what is the nature of happiness?"

Here, we have to consider what happiness actually is. For how long do you desire happiness? You will say, "I want to be happy all the time." If you wish to remain happy all the time, you have to seek it in something which is always there. How can you have it permanently, if you seek it in something which is perishable?

Now, ponder upon this question – which are the places you wish to be happy in? "I want to be happy everywhere", is what you will naturally say. Well, you can only find happiness everywhere, if you seek it in something which is prevalent everywhere. If that which makes you happy, exists in just a few places, how can you be happy everywhere?

If you desire happiness from everything, you have to seek that, which is in everything. How can you get happiness from everything if it is only in a few objects?

If you desire to obtain happiness effortlessly, why do you not seek it from that, which is seated in your own heart? If you desire happiness without bondage, seek it in that, which is ever free. In the same way, you can have the awareness of feeling blissfully happy only if you seek it in that which is Bliss Incarnate.

What I mean to say is that the happiness which you can get everywhere, at all times, from everybody, effortlessly, without bondage, and being delightfully aware that you are happy, is not available anywhere else, but in the Lord.

That is why Viduraji spoke about this to Maytreiyaji, pointing out that the things people do to obtain happiness, brings them only unhappiness. Far from obtaining happiness, they do not even manage to get rid of their sorrows. “Revered Sir, please explain the reason for this contradiction. If the Lord Himself, is everything, why is life filled with sorrow and bondage? How is it possible that the individual soul is not separate from the Lord, and yet he suffers, gets bound, considering himself to be mortal?” asked Viduraji.

Maitreyaji replied, “Viduraji, this is all due to the Lord’s Maya:

सेयं भगवतो माया यन्न येन विरुध्यते। ३.७.९.

*Se`yam bhagavato maayaa yanna ye`na virudhyate`. 3.7.9.*

We experience sorrow where it does not exist. The Self, which is Bliss Incarnate, is totally unknown to us. Thus we are wandering in the dark, unaware of the Self-effulgent Atman. The Lord’s Maya is such that it cannot be proved by logic. Whatever is proved by logic is natural, and therefore it cannot be termed as Maya. Even the scientific world is not Maya. Maya is defined as something which appears, but cannot be proved.”

Maitreyaji also said:

अशेषसंक्लेशशमं विधत्ते गुणानुवादश्रवणं मुरारेः।

कुतः पुनस्तच्चरणारारविन्दपरागसेवारतिरात्मलब्धा।। ३.७.१४

*Ashe`shasankle`shashamam vidhatte`gunaanuvaadashravanam murare`,  
Kutah punastaccharanaaravindaparaagase`vaaratiraatmalabdhaa. 3.7.14.*

“Come, Vidura, sit beside me. I will speak, and you listen, about the Lord. All your remaining doubts will be removed when you begin to enjoy discourses upon Him. Shravan is the only way out of our problems.”

Now, the time is up, for today. Tomorrow, I will give you a brief outline of the dialogue between Vidura and Maitreya. You will also be told about how Shesha Bhagwan\* speaks about the Lord, how the Lord descended as the Varaha Avatar\* and how He killed Hiranyaksha. The episode of Kapil-Devahuti will also be covered tomorrow.

Om Shantih Shantih Shantih.

## **BHAGWATAMRIT**

### **Pravarchan III.**

#### **(Skandha III & IV)**

On the one hand, the Suta-Shaunak talks continue in Naimisharanya\*, and on the other hand, two dialogues are taking place on the banks of the Ganga. One is between Shukadev and Parikshit, and the other is between Vidura and Maitreya. When different sages say the same thing again and again, at different times and in different places, it is an indication of the authenticity and importance of the subject under discussion. The great thinkers give particular importance to something repeated by a sage.

When Maitreyaji started talking about the Lord, he began by giving the lineage of his Gurus. He spoke of how this lineage begins with the Shesha\*, who survives when the world is dissolved. He explained that the Knowledge handed down, was given originally by the four Sanatkumars, Sankhyayana, and Vrihaspati.

New knowledge reveals new facts, but when it comes to the one, indivisible, eternal Truth, then it is that one, indivisible, eternal Truth alone, which is the Ultimate Gnan. As far as scientific discoveries go, it is always the latest discovery which is accepted as valid. Even in medical sciences, it is always the latest drugs which are considered the best. However, when it comes to the eternal Truth, and the question is raised about what is the eternal, endless, unchanging, unbiased, and ultimate Truth, then that Truth is considered authentic, which is free of any changeable or limited background of any individual.

If you were to argue, that since God made everything, He must also have made Gnan, then that is not a valid argument. Was there no knowledge before Gnan (knowledge) was made? It is not so. Gnan is not made; neither by God, nor by a human. We connect the beginning and end of objects of desire, and superimpose the same assumption upon Gnan. Then we say that there must be a point when Gnan began. Such thinking apart, Gnan has no beginning.

When did Time begin? Did it begin in Time, or outside of Time? When did space begin? In space, or beyond space? The fact is that where eternal factors are concerned, the only foundation for their knowledge are the Vedas. The Vedas are free of the differences of the knower and the known. They are pure, impersonal knowledge. They are anaadi\* and anant\*.

Maitreyaji described the lineage of his knowledge, and told Viduraji, “The Sanakadi sages went to Bhagwan Sakarshan\*, who has the supreme knowledge about everything. At that time, the Lord Sankarshan was residing in the Patala loka\*. The sages asked him to grace them with the knowledge of the Param\* Purushottama\* Brahman. The Lord Shesha told them that when the world was immersed in the waters of potential causality, a lotus grew from the naval of the Lord Narayana (who reclines on the coiled form of the thousand headed serpent, Shesha), and Brahmaji emerged from within the lotus flower.

उदाप्लुतं विश्वमिदं तदाऽऽसीद् यान्निद्रयामीलितदृङ् न्यमीलयत्।  
अहीन्द्रतल्पेऽधिशयान एकः कृतक्षणः स्वात्मरतौ निरीहः॥ ३.८.१०

*Udaaplutam vishvamidam tadaaseed yannidrayaameelitadrinyameelayat,  
Aheendratalpe`adhishayaana e`kah kritakshanah svaatmaratau nireehah.  
3.8.10.*

You see, there are three eons, namely the Brahma Kalpa\*, the Padma Kalpa\* and the Varaha Kalpa\*. These are all different periods in Time. Sometimes the Earth was created from the thigh of the Lord, and sometimes from His feet. It emerges from the ocean, or even manifests on its own, at the will of the Paramatama. This is how the different Puranas describe the birth of the Earth.

It was in the Padma Kalpa, that Brahmaji emerged from the lotus in the Lord’s naval. His body split into two portions, when he decided to create the world. Brahmaji’s body is not gross, like ours. The whole subtle world is the body of Brahmaji. Hence, of the two parts of his body, one became Swayambhuva\*, the son of Swayambhu\*, and the other part became Shatroopa. Shatroopa was Brahmaji’s feminine aspect, containing Shakti, the beauty of shraddha\*, extreme sweetness, and extreme tenderness. The first half, which became Manu, was male. These two were tied in wedlock and became husband and wife.

Manu and Shatroopa folded their hands and asked Brahmaji what he wanted them to do. This pleased Brahmaji, because a father is always pleased when his children desire to know and do their duties.

So, the delighted Brahmaji told Manu and Shatroopa that he wanted them to have many children, and increase the population of the world. Manu agreed, but pointed out that they needed a place where they could stay and have children. Brahmaji realized the validity of the problem, and began to think how best it may be solved.

Now, you have to consider how the Earth was created. As mentioned earlier, the Upanishads say that the Earth emerged from water –

अद्भ्यः पृथिवी।

*Adbhyah prithivee.*

The Earth is also described as emerging from Brahma:

एतस्माज्जायते प्राणो मनः सर्वेन्द्रियाणि च।

खं वायुर्ज्योतिरापः पृथिवी विश्वस्य धारिणी॥

मुण्डकोपनिषद्

*E`tasmaajjaayate` praano manah sarve`ndriyaani cha,  
Kham vaayurjyotiraapah prithivee vishvasya dhaarinee.  
Mundakopanishad.*

Thus, the Earth is described as emerging from water, and also from the Lord. On this occasion, however, the Earth is shown to be submerged in water, and Brahmaji began to think about how it could be made to emerge. He wondered where the dharinee\* Shakti of the Earth had gone.

The Earth has supporting power. Water has the power to satisfy. The power of fire is brightness. The wind has the power of movement, and the space has the power to permeate. These are the powers of the Atman. That is why it is said, that creation begins where “I” is. It was mentioned earlier, that the North, South, east, West, up and down, all the directions are manifested where the “I” is. That is why we must investigate the “I”, when we wish to seek God.

So, when Brahmaji wished to know how to manifest the dharinee Shakti of the Prithivi\*, he meditated upon the Lord. Just then, a tiny Varaha emerged from his nostrils. If you pay attention, you will realize that the Earth’s predominant quality is fragrance. According to the philosophical schools of Nyaya Vaisheshik and Yoga Sankhya, fragrance emits from a tanmaatra\*, and is known by the organ of smell. The Prithivi becomes the adhibhoota\*, the nose becomes the adhyatma\*, and the Paramatma emerged as the adhidaiva\* Varaha. The Varaha form is also called the Yagya\* form of the Lord, because Yagya abides in every follicle of the Varaha’s body.

Even today, we can see how much the pigs love the earth. They eat even the filthiest parts with relish. They delight in rolling in the mud. They thrust their snout into the slush, and bring lumps of mud out of the water. What is Yagya? Yagya is when actions are undertaken for the benefit of all. What greater Yagya can there be, than devouring the unclean, and cleansing the earth? Then, when the adhidaiva Shakti of the Lord emerged as Varaha,

from the nostrils of Brahmaji, it started to grow rapidly. In a little while, the mammoth form of the Varaha entered the ocean. When the Varaha shook Himself, His hairs created gigantic waves which reached the elevated realms, and the sages there bathed themselves in these waves, and were purified.

Brahmaji began to praise the Lord Varaha. The Lord Varaha went straight to the spot where the Earth lay submerged. He raised the Earth on His snout. This symbolizes that the Lord gives prime importance to the Earth. Then, He emerged from the waters, and placed the Earth securely, so that Manu and Shatroopa could live upon it, and procreate, as commanded by Brahmaji.

These are not mere mythological tales. These stories contain scientific facts, which cannot be elaborated upon, due to time constraints.

It was in this context that Viduraji placed his questions to Maitreyaji. “Sir, I have heard that when the Lord Varaha came to save the Earth, He met the first demon, Hiranyaksha, and killed him after a fierce battle. Since you are telling me about how the Earth was uplifted, I pray you tell me in detail, about how Hiranyaksha tried to hinder the Lord, and how the Lord killed him.”

Brahmaji had just started to create, and Manu-Shatroopa had just been manifested from his body, and no one else had yet been born. Then, from where did Hiranyaksha appear, to battle with Lord Varaha? Hiranyaksha was the son of Diti and the sage Kashyap, and there was a large population in existence, when he and his brother Hiranyakashipu were born. Then, how did he come onto the scene when Brahmaji was yet to create the world?

The answer, given in the Puranas, is worth listening to. Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu were not born in that Kalpa. They were creatures of the Padma Kalpa, in which an age ends with the end of every day of Brahma’s life. Destruction is not total, in the end of those ages. During the partial pralay\*, Kashyap and his wife Aditi go to heaven, while Diti goes to Patal\*, and the two demon sons of Diti remain in the deluge of destruction, to practice asceticism. At that point of time, they consider themselves to be the Monarchs of the waters. Hence, when the Lord Varaha went to rise up the Earth, Hiranyaksha blocked His path, claiming that the Earth belonged to him.

The second question which crops up is, from where did Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu obtain such wealth, strength and powers? The answer is yet another Leela of the Lord. Remember that Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu had fallen from Vaikunth, at the curse of the Sanatkumars. These are amongst those who are born enlightened, and do not need a Guru. The Sanakadis had not obtained tattvagnan from any Guru.

The message given in this episode is that the Earth is upheld by the Lord's power, and not by the power of any action. The Lord is sarva samartha\*. If the Lord lacked the power to release people from bondage, and bind those who are liberated; or create something where there is nothing, then His power for achieving everything would not be revealed. So, the Lord showed that the liberated Jay-Vijay of Vaikunth could, at His wish, be sent to the Earth. Not only were they sent down, they were born as Asuras\*. They were bound (by birth) even though they had achieved liberation. Then, the Lord liberated them again.

The entire responsibility and power of the world is, thus, upon the Lord. The enormous powers and long life of even those who fall from Vaikunth, is worth noting. The extent of their wealth and glory are such that even Brahma and other demigods are induced to bow before them. They are not affected by Time. It needs – not even their own – just a wish of their people, for rivers of milk to start flowing, and precious gems to emerge, and cause great sages to sing their praises, and make the sky wondrously beautiful to behold.

When we consider the extent of wealth and power which those dispelled from Vaikunth possess, we can imagine the amount of power, wealth, luxury and comfort of those living in Vaikunth.

So, when Viduraji asked about where Hiranyaksha came from, and the reason the Lord decided to kill him, Maitreyaji began to narrate the whole background. He said, “The Sanakadi sages, prompted by the wish of the Lord, went to Vaikunth to meet Him.”

Now, the Sanakadis are the best among sages, and live close to the land of the Lord. It is easy for them to meditate upon the Lord, since they know His essence. They never have any desire to go physically to Vaikunth to see the Lord. They never feel that He is somewhere else, far away, and not with them. They do not feel that He is only in a particular form or in a particular point in Time. This is why they seldom go to Vaikunth, even though they live so close to it, and possess the power to go anywhere in creation.

The Sanakadis went to Vaikunth because they were in tune with the Lord, and understood that He wished to carry out a particular Leela. The Lord was reclining upon His Shesha Shaiya\*, which endures even during the dissolution of Creation, and is the softest bed imaginable! The Lord has the milky ocean, He has the gorgeous jewel, kaustuvmani upon His chest, the goddess Laxmi is with Him, and with Him rests the power to sustain the entire creation.

One day, the Lord felt an impulse to take a trip out of Vaikunth. He felt like exercising His four arms with some work.



Jay-Vijay are the gatekeepers of the Lord. They symbolize indriya jaya\* and mano vijay\*. They had the capacity to control their mind and body. A simultaneous desire arose in them, to have some play with the Lord.

It so happened, that Laxmiji had, one day, gone out of Vaikunth. The beauty of Vaikunth defies description. Laxmiji saw walls studded with precious gems, and crystals so clear that it was like seeing one's reflection in a pool of clear water. When Laxmiji returned, Jay-Vijay asked her to wait awhile, since the Lord was in yoga nidra\*.

This annoyed Laxmiji. She felt insulted that she, being the mistress of the house, was made to wait outside, by the gate keepers, who were, after all, her servants! She complained to the Lord, telling Him how His gatekeepers had stopped her from entering His chamber.

The Lord told her to forbear a little. He pointed out that it would not be seemly if He banished them at her instigation. People would accuse Him of being ruled by His wife. "I will banish Jay-Vijay the day they insult a sage," He promised. Laxmiji was calmed by these words, because she always obeys the Lord.

The Sanatkumars came soon after this incident, and were stopped by Jay-Vijay. As mentioned earlier, both are liberated souls, with full Knowledge. They knew the Sanakadis perfectly well. At that moment, however, the Lord caused them to consider the sages to be mere children.

So, Jay-Vijay blocked the Sanakadis' path. It was God's design that the Sanakadis came, and His gate keepers blocked their path. It was God's design that He permitted anger to rise even in Vaikunth, because everything there is pure and perfect. The Lord creates His abode by that which is Sad\*, His devotees by that which is Chid\*, so that they can savor His sweetness, and Rasa\* to create His own form. The Lord's form is rasamaya\*. Those who thirst for it are chinmaya\*, and His eternal land is sanmaya\*. There is no question of anger entering there. Anger comes to those whose hearts burn. It is the child of hatred. Anger wells up when we hate someone, and burns up the heart of the one who harbors anger, just as fire burns up the wood which houses it.

The Bhagwat calls anger 'Kamanuja\*', just as Laxman is called 'Ramanuja\*'. Anger follows desire, just like Laxman follows Rama! So, the Sanakadis were overcome by Kamanuja when Jay-Vijay misbehaved with them. Their eyes reddened a little, and they said, "The whole creation exists in the stomach of the Lord; its existence is caused by His wish. How can there be such differentiation in His land? उदरभेदि भयं *Udarbhedi bhayam* – worldly people differentiate because of their stomach, resulting in much damage. Selfishness is the only reason for this. You are not fit to be in

Vaikunth, when you behave like those people. You deserve to be in the body of an Asura.” An Asura is the person who fails to understand the working of his Antahkaran, one who gets engrossed in attaining the sensual pleasures of the material world.

असुषु प्राणेषु इन्द्रियेषु रमन्ते इति असुराः ।

*Asushu praane`shu indriye`shu ramante` iti asuraah.*

So, the Sanakadis said, “Go to where sensuous people live. You can differentiate to your heart’s content there. You can satiate your desires and be as angry and greedy as you wish.”

Now, give a thought to Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu. They are rich by virtue of their greed. हिरण्ये अक्षिणी यस्ये *Hiranye` akshinee yasye`* – Hiranyaksha means ‘the one whose eyes are fixed on gold.’ And, हिरण्यं कशिपूर्यस्य *hiranyam kashipurasya* - Hiranyakashipu means ‘the one who sleeps on a bed of gold.’ Greed was the predominant fault in these two demons. Desire was predominant in Ravana, and anger was predominant in Shishupal. Thus, the attendants of the Lord identified with demonic tendencies.

The Lord came to the Sanakadi sages. He welcomed them with all reverence, and said, “The curse you have given to these two, is most appropriate.”

Just see how tactful the Lord is. People should never side with their servants on such occasions. They should first pacify the enraged guests.

So, the Lord Narayana said, “Despite being My attendants, these two do not understand My priorities. They go against My wishes, when they show disrespect to the Mahatmas. That is why it is proper for you to curse them. Respected Sirs, I consider the Mahatmas My all-in-all. If the Mahatmas did not speak about My virtues, Laxmi would not accept Me. Neither would I be living in Vaikunth, and nor would anyone know Me to be God. It is through your mouths that I eat, and you are the foundation for My existence.

श्छिन्द्यां स्वबाहुमपि वः प्रतिकूलवृत्तिम् । ३.१६.६

*Shchindyaam svabaahumapi vah pratikoolavrittimm.*

3.16.6.

I can even cut off My arms, if they do anything against you. Of what importance are these attendants? They should now go to Earth, as you have

said, and go through the curse given by you, and then return quickly to Vaikunth. It is My principle, with regard to those who serve Me, that I consider their mistake to be Mine. Therefore, they will descend three times to Earth, as demons, and I will follow them four times, for their salvation. I will take on the form of Varaha for Hiranyaksha, the form of Narasimha\* for Hiranyakashipu, the form of Rama for Ravana, and the form of Krishna for Shishupal. I will go four times for their salvation, and bring them back to My abode.”

The story about how Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu were born to Kashyap and Diti is most instructive. Kashyapji is also a form of the Lord. The Nirukta\* analyzes the meaning of kashyap thus: कश्यपः कस्मात् ? *kashyapah kasmaat?* – why is Kashyap called Kashyap? यतः पश्यति, पश्यक एव कश्यपो भवति *Yatah pashyati pashyaka e`va kashyapo bhavati* - the one who makes no differentiation in the way he views people with godly or demonic traits. Kashyap treats both his wives, Diti and Aditi, alike. Diti means ‘the one who divides’ and Aditi means ‘the one who unifies.’ Both are wives of Kashyapji, meaning that both are tendencies which work in the mind, and are fostered by the individual. Both become pregnant (bear fruit) and bring forth children (results).

One evening, when the sage Kashyap was seated in deep meditation, lust arose in the mind of Diti. She went to Kashyapji and demanded conjugal satisfaction. The scriptures are severely critical of women who get carried away by passion. धिक् तां या याचते स्वयम् ‘*Dhik taam yaa yaachate` svayam`*’ - shame on the woman who appeals to a man for physical satisfaction. It is considered contemptible, even in the Kamashastras\*.

Kashyap told Diti to wait a while, because of five factors which made her demands unsuitable for fulfillment. “One reason is that I am, at present, seated for meditation. Secondly, conjugal acts are forbidden at evening. Thirdly, the Lord Rudra\* moves about with his followers during this time of the day. The fourth reason is that at this moment, you are overcome by lust. The fifth reason is that I am disinclined. Under the circumstances, it is most inappropriate to accept your demand.”

Diti, however, paid no heed to what Kashyapji said. She continued to force herself shamelessly on him. Then Kashyapji bowed to the Lord, considering it to be His wish. Jay-Vijay, fallen from Vaikunth, entered Diti’s womb.

Now, observe the fact that it is only women who can have children. Although physically different, men and women are made of the same five elements. Still, only the women have the ability to bear a fetus and provide nourishment to the unborn baby in her womb. Men lack this power. So, even

though men and women have equal rights in society, one has the ability to impregnate and the other has the ability to become pregnant.

According to the scientific descriptions in our scriptures, a woman is influenced more by the lunar power and a man by solar power. A child is born by the unification of both the solar and the lunar influences. The raja\* is affected by the moon, and the veerya\* is affected by the sun. Thus, the softness in the baby comes from the mother, while the hardness (bones, etc) come from the father. This is what our scriptures have stated.

The world was besieged with all kinds of trouble, when Jay-Vijay entered Diti's womb. The Devtas were terrified, and rushed to Brahmaji. Brahmaji told them how Jay and Vijay had entered Diti's womb, due to a curse.

विश्वस्य यः स्थितिलयोद्भवहेतुराद्यो  
योगेश्वरैरपि दुरत्यययोगमायः ।  
क्षेमं विधास्यति स नो भगवांस्त्रयधीश-  
स्तत्रास्मदीयविमृशेन क्रियानिहार्थः ॥ ३.१६.३७

*Vishvasya yah sthitilayodbhavahe`turaadyo  
Yoge`shvarairapi duratyayayogamaayah,  
Kshe`mam vidhaasyati sa no bhagavaanstrayadheesha  
Statraasamadeeyavimrishe`na kriyaanihaarthah.  
3.16.37.*

“Remember, Devtas, He who is the cause of the Creation, Sustenance and Destruction sees everything; so, have no fear. He will do everything that is good. The Lord rules Maya. He makes her dance like a deer, with all her three Gunas. That Lord will do everything for our wellbeing. Why should we worry? Everything will turn out for the best.”

Reassured by these words, the Devtas returned to their abode. Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu were born when the time was right. Hiranyaksha continued to practice tapasya\* even during the pralay, and when he realized – in the next, Varaha Kalpa – that the Lord was coming to rescue the Earth, he rushed to challenge Him.

The battle between Hiranyaksha and the Lord was long and fierce. It continued for about one day of Brahmaji, which is a very, very long time. This made Brahmaji nervous, and he prayed to the Lord to kill Hiranyaksha quickly. The Lord tore open Hiranyaksha's stomach, and at once a flame merged, and prepared to turn into Ravana. This is because the Lord had desired that he be born thrice, as he wished the curse of the Brahmins to be fulfilled.

Thus, when the Lord killed Hiranyaksha and established the Earth, Brahmaji was happy that a place was now available for people to live upon. Then Manuji and Shatroopa came to Brahmaji. Brahmaji blessed them and told them to create a large population, and rule with kindness.

Brahmaji had many other sons, but he wanted the population to grow, as there were very few people. People began to live on the Earth, and the world grew. The description of how Brahmaji created the world may be read in the original Bhagwat.

It is astonishing to read of the different causes given for the creation of the world. At times, the Lord, Himself, becomes the world. At times it is created by the five elements. Sometimes, by Brahmaji; sometimes it is created step by step, and sometimes without any calculable order. One cannot pinpoint the exact cause by latching on to any particular theory of creation. One has to consider the differences of Time, place, items, and the one who creates. The Brahmaids\* are the only ones who truly know the causes of creation. It is not possible to obtain this knowledge by sitting in a library to study the Puranas and other texts. These episodes are at three different levels – adhyatmik\*, adhidaivik\*, and adhibhautik\*.

Manu and Shatroopa had nine daughters, one of which was Devhuti\*. The one who has the capacity to call the Lord is called Devhuti. When the mind is naturally inclined towards the Lord, it causes Him to be drawn to the devotee, and this inclination is called Devhuti.

Devhuti was married to Kardam Rishi\*, who was born enriched with tattvagnan\*. When Kardamji undertook austerities to attain the Lord, Brahmaji told him to get married and have children. Kardamji reflected that it is best to develop strength through austerities, before embarking upon marriage and procreation.

Just think about how much importance people used to pay to brahmacharya\*. The seed of those who lack self control and austerity is weakened, resulting in the birth of a weak person.

So, Kardamji decided to practice asceticism and develop strength. He undertook worship at a place called Siddhapur, in Gujarat. Pleased by his worship, the Lord Vishnu appeared, seated upon His eagle, Garuda. Kardamji eulogized Him, and the Lord blessed Kardamji, and granted him a boon.

Do you know why the Lord uses Garuda as His mount? It is because the Garuda is the personification of a word picture; he is the personification of the Sama Veda. The words of the Sama Veda are heard, when he flaps his wings. The Lord bestows a glimpse of Himself, by appearing seated upon the words, of which the Garuda is a personification. How can the Lord be

seen by those who have no mantra\*, who do no japa\*, and who lack the appropriate words? Words are His vehicle, because they bring the Lord to us.

The Lord Vishnu said, “Kardamji, I am aware of the reason for your tapasya. I have already made all suitable arrangements. Swayambhuva Manu and his wife Shatroopa will come to you, the day after tomorrow. They will bring their daughter, Devhuti, and ask you to accept her hand in marriage. So, stay here, and await their arrival.” Having said this, the Lord disappeared.

Swayambhuva Manu, his wife Shatroopa and daughter, Devhuti, came on a chariot, on the third day. Kardamji welcomed them, and asked, “Sir, I hope your people live happily under your rule? The only King fit to rule is the one whose people are well looked after and content. No King is a true King, if he causes sorrow for his people. Please tell me whether the arrangements for water are satisfactory there? I hope good food is available for all? I hope that all are content and have no cause for fear?”

Swayambhuva Manu replied, “Maharaj, you have, in the guise of asking about the well-being of my people, given guidance about the duties of a King. I have but one anxiety, that my daughter should get married to a man of excellence. I have heard that you are prepared to accept marriage. That is why my wife and I have brought our daughter to you. Please accept her as your wife. We have brought exactly what you desire, so please do not disagree.”

उद्यतस्य हि कामस्य प्रतिवादो न शक्यते।

*Udyatasya hi kaamasya prativaado na shakyate`.*

Kardamji replied, “Maharaj, who is it, who will fail to respect your daughter? She is so beautiful, so intelligent, and so full of virtues and wisdom that even the Gandharva\* Vishwavasu fell off his plane because he was so enthralled when he saw her.”

Devhuti blushed to hear Kardamji’s praises, because she was a mature woman. As I have pointed out repeatedly, not a single lady in the Shrimad Bhagwat has been married at an early age, or without full knowledge of what was happening. In all the marriages described, the brides were already in love with the grooms. Even in the abductions, the brides are youthful, but not immature or unwilling.

So, Kardamji accepted Swayambhuva Manu’s proposal, and married Devhuti. After the wedding, Swayambhuva Manu and Shatroopa returned to their kingdom, and Devhuti stayed back with Kardamji. Kardamji had no cottage and no kitchen. He lived under a tree. Despite this, Devhuti - the

daughter of an Emperor – began to serve him. She was as devoted as the legendary wife, Savitri.

When it is possible for us to worship the Lord in a statue made by a man, why can't we see and worship the Lord in a man, made by the Lord? What can stop us from getting the rewards of ritual worship, whether the Lord is worshipped in the form of a statue or in the form of a human? Unselfish service always brings benefits like control over sense organs, a purified mind, and merit equal to that of a great ascetic. Failure is caused by lack of faith. The mind and desires are restless, as it is. They become more so, when lack of faith adds to the restlessness, and prevents them from settling down anywhere.

Devhuti had tremendous faith in Kardamji's strength. She was engrossed in attending to his every need. Kardamji was satisfied with her loving service – तेजीयांसमतोषयत् '*te`jeeyaansamatoshayat*'.

You see, faith abides where purity exists. Confidence abides where faith exists. Complete confidence in each other creates true love, and with it, the desire develops, to bring comfort and pleasure to the loved one. In such idyllic conditions, it matters little whether material comforts like food and clothes are available or not.

One day, Kardamji felt very happy and said, "Devi\*, you served me without bothering about your body, sense organs, or mind. Your service has been dedicated and unselfish. So, you should also get the same fruit of my austerities as I get, and go to the same land (after death) as I. Now, tell me what is in your mind, and what your desire is."

Devhuti spoke shyly, "Sir, the purpose of marriage is unification – सकृदंगसंगो भूयात् '*sakridangasango bhooyat*'. So, I should be given the good fortune to be loved as your wife, fully, just once – प्रियेषु सौभाग्यफला हि चारुता '*priye`shu saubhaagyafalaa hi chaarutaa*'. If this body of mine is used by you, and serves to give pleasure, then my birth, beauty, and life will be successful and fulfilled."

Kardamji accepted Devhuti's plea without hesitation. Then he saw that she did not seem very happy, so he made an aircraft. Those who give discourses upon the Puranas, speak at length about this wonderful airship. They describe how many rooms it had, how many levels, what the rooms were like, what luxuries it contained, etc. When the aircraft was ready, Devhuti bathed in its pool of elixir, and a number of handmaidens appeared, to serve her. Then Kardamji bathed in it. Both acquired a divine beauty, and began to tour the universe in this aircraft.

You see, tapasya is something which brings results, without any doubt. At first, there may be many hardships, but the results are always sweet – क्लेशः फलेन हि पुनर्नवतां विधत्ते ‘*kle`shah fale`na hi punarnavataam vidhatte`*’. When a person endures discomfort, he obtains new benefits. पीडोद्भवाः सिद्धयः ‘*Peedodbhavaah siddhayah`*’ - the successful person is he who tolerates discomfort.

Now, Kardamji and Devhuti went around the universe like celestial beings. Then he used his powers, and extended himself to create nine daughters. All of them were married to great sages.

After this, Kardamji told Devhuti, “Devi, now you have obtained your heart’s desire. Give me leave to go and practice asceticism. My inclinations are not for physical pleasures. The desire for pleasures can never be satiated. The more we get, the more we want. हविषा कृष्णवर्त्मैव भूय एवाभिवर्धते ‘*Havishaa krishnavartme`va bhooya e`vaabhivardhate`*’ there is no end to thirst. That is why I will now go for tapasya.”

Devhuti replied, “Swami\*, you have got our daughters married. It would be nice if I had a son. You had accepted to be with me until I got a son. The Lord has granted you the boon that He will be born as your son. So, please stay with me a little longer.”

Kardamji agreed, realizing that the Lord was soon to appear in Devhuti’s womb, and be born as Kapildev.

People debate whether the Atman is sakar\* or nirakar\*. Some are convinced that it is nirakar. It is, however, the same Atman which connects itself to our desires, and enters our body, and takes birth. It has Avidya attached to it. That is why its actions are propelled by desires, and this results in its being born in different forms. The Lord is everywhere, even though He is formless. He is, moreover, all-powerful, and He is in all forms, and chooses to become sakar, using His own power of Maya. The Lord is not the fragment of some human’s imagination; nor is He a human being with exceptional qualities. The Lord descends and manifests in different forms, as an Avatar.

Neither the Jains, nor the Buddhists believe in the Avatar of the Lord. Since they do not believe in God, how can they believe that God takes on an Avatar? Their belief says that the individual soul is uplifted, as it becomes pure. All the Buddhas, Jins, Parasnaths, Mahaviras, are purified souls of human beings. Our Vedic scriptures, however, accept the existence of God, and say that His mercy induces Him to descend, and save the people on Earth.



You see, the Kriya Yoga\* was predominant in the Varaha Avatar. The Earth is sanmayi\*, and stays in an inanimate form. So, it is uplifted by the Varaha form of the Lord; and His action is Yagya pradhan\*. Action is required for any kind of progress.

The Kapil Avatar\*, however, is gnan pradhan. A predominance of knowledge is used, to rend asunder the Avidya granthi\*, and liberate the people of the world. Kapildevji is the Gnan Avatar of the Lord. You will notice a spectacular fact about Him, which astounds even those who believe in the sakar.

Brahmajji came to eulogize the Lord, when He was born as Kapildev. Then Kardamji came, and bowed down to his son, saying, “Lord, I had prayed only for You to come as my son, and You granted me this boon. Now that you have come, I will go and live in seclusion, to meditate until I have obtained the realization that my true Self is the Brahman. The entire creation we see is nothing but a mental projection. It appears to be real, just as a piece of rope appears to be a real snake. I wish to meditate upon my Self, and obtain Brahmagnan\*, until I attain the stage when the world no longer seems real. Please stay here, and liberate your mother.”

Such is the greatness of Mahatmas! This is real vairagya! This is true renunciation, and this is true aloofness. The Lord, Himself, has come as Kardamji’s son, but Kardamji does His parikrama\*, and establishes his mind in the Self, and goes off to wander in absolute freedom.

Then Devhuti said to Kapildev, “So much of my life has passed in vain इन्द्रियार्थप्रसंगेन ‘indreeyarthaprasange`na’ indulging my sense organs, in sensual objects. You are the Lord, and have manifested as my son. Please advise me regarding the Vidya\* which quietens Avidya\*. The Atman is actually, and in essence, the Paramatma, just as a pot is actually, and in essence, the clay of which it is made. It may be called by different names, but the item is not separate from the matter it is made of. The names given are imagined in the minds of people.”

Do you consider yourself to be a vessel, or do you consider yourself to be the clay? If you consider yourself the vessel, then you have had a birth, which may even have a black smudge upon it; it may break. It may be filled either with water, or with wine, or with water of the Ganga. However, if you do not accept the deha buddhi\*, but accept, instead, the mritika buddhi\*, then you will be free of all dualities. There will be no question of your being filled with water, wine, or Ganga water; nor of any sin and merit; nor of attachment and aversion; nor of joy and sorrow. It is clay, whether it is held together in the shape of a pot, or smashed into pieces. There is, actually, only clay.

That is why Devhuti prayed to Lord Kapildev, for tattvagnan. Kapil Bhagawan said, “You see, Mother,

चेतः खल्वस्य बन्धाय मुक्तये चात्मनो मतम्।

*Che`tah khalvasya bandhaaya muktaye` chaatmano matam.*

There is no bondage, nor liberation, in the essence of the Atman. The impression that we are bound is caused by Avidya. It is because we do not know our real Self that we feel we are individual entities, and are bound. As soon as the illusion of being separate is dispelled from our conscious mind, we realize that we are already free.

गुणेषु सक्तं बन्धाय रतं वा पुंसि मुक्तये।

*Gune`shu saktam bandhaaya ratam vaa punsi muktaye`.*

If you are attached to anything in the world, you are bound; and if this attachment is severed, you are free.”

Kapildevji gave many examples to explain this principle. This dialogue between the Lord and Devhuti is the essence of the Sankhya philosophy. In His talk, Kapildevji explained the division of Prakriti-Purusha\*, saying that that which is seen, is Prakriti, and the one who sees, is the Atman. That, which is seen, has three portions. One is the karya\*, and the other is the karan\*. The karan is that which is not caused by any external factor. This is Prakriti.

Karya is that which has no other effect. That is panchabhoota, which has no further effect. The trees, animals, birds, humans etc, are not made by panchabhoota, they are the panchabhoota. The ultimate effect we see are the earth, water, fire, wind, and space. All the form seen within these, are imagined.

So, even in the Sankhya philosophy, the humans, animals, birds, etc. are all imagined within the five elements – they have no reality. Where is space split up? Where is the wind divided? How can fire be differentiated? Where is water separated? Where is the earth fragmented? The wind in the bodies is one. So are the space, heat, moisture and solid contents. There is no essential difference in all the different bodies in the world.

This is why the panchabhootas are called the karya, and Prakriti is called the karan (since it is not caused by any external factor). Now, the stages in between the karya (of the panchabhoota) and the karan (of Prakriti) is called the karya-karan. Viewed from the angle of the five elements, it is the karan

(cause), and viewed from the angle of Prakriti, it is the karya (effect). So, the visible has three levels – karya, karan, and a mixture of both, karya-karan. The detached Atman is totally a drashtaa\*. The changes in Prakriti, or in any condition, or factor, do not affect the Atman in any way. It is not easy to become oblivious of the Prakriti. One needs to practice intense yogic meditation to achieve this. Bhakti is the best alternative for those who cannot undertake meditation. Kapildevji meditated upon the nature of the Lord, and then spoke about Bhakti.

ज्यायेच्चिरं भगवतश्चरणारविन्दम्।

*Jyaaye`cchiram bhagavatashcharanaaravindam.*

One should contemplate on the Lord, moving from the feet to the face, and from the face to the beautiful feet of the Lord, and dwell upon His shrivigraha\*. Let the mind revel in the beauty of the Lord. The mind strays, anyway! Instead of allowing it to roam outside, use dharna yoga\* to bring it back repeatedly, to the lovely form of the Lord. Let it admire with increasing love, the lotus-like face of the Lord, His beautiful crown and earrings, His broad forehead and gracious eyebrows, the eyes filled with love, the beautifully molded nose, lips, and His enchanting smile. Focus on the pitamber\*, on His broad chest, the armbands on His arms, and the bracelets on His wrists. Focus on the multicolored garland, His anklets and the lotus-like feet, with the high toenails. Let your mind's eye travel from tip to toe, thinking repeatedly, about how enchanting His form and apparel are. Ultimately focus upon the सुस्मितं भावयन्मुखं 'susmitam bhaavayanmukham' – beautiful, smiling countenance.

Meditating in this manner helps to overcome the mind's wayward tendencies. When the mind is completely focused at one point, it is not possible to see the entire form of the Lord. If you see the eyes as clearly as the nose, it means that your mind is not fully focused.

मुक्ताश्रयं यर्हि निर्विषयं विरक्तं

निर्वाणमृच्छति मनः सहसा यथार्चिः।

*Muktaashrayam yarhi nirvishayam viraktam,*

*Nirvaanamricchati manah sahasaa yathaarchih.*

The object of desire is not seen when the aham\* - which is the foundation of the mind – disappears. The mind quietens when there is no attachment or aversion in it, just as a flame dies down when there is no oil in the lamp. All the natural inclinations of the mind – like restlessness and waywardness –

are quietened. The quiet mind shows no sign of being separate from the Paramatma. It dies down, like a fire, and the Parabrahm Paramatma – the Brahman – manifests.

When Kapildevji explained these methods of meditation, Devhuti asked some questions about Bhakti Yoga\*. It is one thing to cultivate a habit of meditation, but it is quite different from developing a deep love and devotion for the Lord. So, Kapildevji gave some more clarifications about Bhakti.

देवानां गुणलिङ्गानामानुश्रविककर्मणाम्।  
सत्त्व एवैकमनसो वृत्तिः स्वाभाविकी तु या।।  
अनिमित्ता भगवति भक्तिः सिद्धेर्गरीयसी।  
जरयत्याशु या कोशं निगीर्णमनलो यथा।। ३.२५.३२-३३

*De`vaanaam gunalingaanaamaanushravikakarmanaam,  
Sattva e`vaikamanaso vrittih svaabhaavikee tu yaa.  
Animittaa bhagavati bhaktih siddhe`rgareeyasee,  
Jarayatyaashu yaa kosham nigeeranamanalo yathaa.  
3.25.32, 33.*

Our sense organs, alike, are demigods, who inform us about the sound, appearance, feel, flavor, and fragrance of objects. Use them well. The hand should be permitted to act only in accordance with what is right and proper. The feet should be allowed to move in a controlled manner. Similarly, the eyes, ears, and nose should not be allowed to function for the sake of satiating base desires. They should be controlled by the dictates of the scriptures, by religious tenets and by righteousness. Discipline of this kind brings satva\* in the mind, and the mind becomes focused, and then you will acquire nishkaam bhakti\*.

It is not possible for bhakti to be acquired, so long as the desires in your heart flit amongst sense objects. It is only when you have no worldly desires that bhakti rises in the heart. Your mind must be quiet. Once you develop a genuine love for the Lord, it burns up and destroys the four koshas\* of the soul. These are the annamaya\*, manomaya\*, praanmaya\*, and vigyaanmaya\* sheaths, which hide our true Self. As soon as these sheaths are burnt down, the individual forgets his individuality and merges with the Paramatma.

Bhakti can dwell in any of three levels – tamasik\*, rajasik\* or satvik\*. Tamasik bhakti is undertaken for cheating or destroying people. Rajasik bhakti is undertaken for worldly gain, but satvik bhakti is for attaining the Lord. There is a bhakti which is even higher than the satvik bhakti.

लक्षणं भक्तियोगस्य निर्गुणस्य ह्युदाहृतम्।

अहैतुक्यव्यवहिता या भक्तिः पुरुषोत्तमे ॥ ३.२९.१२.

*Laxanam bhaktiyogasya nirgunasya hyudaarhritam,*

*Ahaitukyavyavahitaa yaa bhaktih purushottame`.*

3. 29. 12.

What bhakti is that? It is the gunateeta\* bhakti. Its indication is that as soon as the devotee hears any talk about the Lord, he becomes immersed in thoughts about Him. He visualizes, “See, here comes Sudamaji\*. At the sight of His friend, the Lord puts Rukminiji aside. He has risen from his bed and is running towards Sudamaji. He is embracing Sudamaji, and His eyes are brimming with tears of joy.” The Lord is devoted to the Brahmins; He has the inherent quality of looking after the lowly. When he hears about the qualities of the Lord, the devotee’s thoughts flow effortlessly towards Him, just as the waters of the Ganga pour themselves into the sea. No further cause is needed, for them to get engrossed in thoughts about the Lord. The Lord is always seated in their heart, and is won over by such love and devotion.

मद्गुणश्रुतिमात्रेण मयि सर्वगुहाशये।

मनोगतिरविच्छिन्ना यथा गंगाम्भसोऽम्बुधौ ॥ २.२९.११

*Madgunashrutimaatre`na mayi sarvaguhaashaye`,*

*Manogatirvicchinnaa yathaa gangaambhasombudhau.*

2. 29. 11.

Kapildevji has mentioned here, some points which are not found elsewhere. While explaining the essence of bhakti, He says,

अहं सर्वेषु भूतेषु भूतात्मावस्थितः सदा।

तमवज्ञाय माँ मर्त्यः कुरुतेऽर्चाविडम्बनम् ॥ २.२९.२१

*Aham sarve`shu bhooteaatmaavasthitah sadaa,*

*Tamavagyaaya maam martyah kurute`rchaavidambanam.*

2. 29. 21.

“I have made the bodies of all creatures My temple, and I am seated therein, as the Atman. So, when someone insults another – forgetting that I am seated in the heart of that person – and then makes a great display of ritualistic worship, it is mere mockery.

द्विषतः परकाये मां मानिनो भिन्नदर्शिनः ।  
भूतेषु बद्धवैरस्य न मनः शान्तिमृच्छति ॥ ३.२९.२३

*Dvishtah parakaaye` maam maanino bhinnadarshinah,  
Bhoote`shu baddhavairasya na manah shaantimricchati.  
3. 29. 23.*

If a man has hatred for someone, he hates Me, as I am seated in the heart of all. When he thinks he is great and special, and shows partiality for some and prejudice against others, he can never attain peace.”

अहमुच्चावचैर्द्रव्यैः किययोत्पन्नयानघे ।  
नैव तुष्येऽचितोऽर्चायां भूतग्रामावमानिनः ॥ ३.२९.२४  
*Ahamucchaavacchairdravyaih kriyayotpannayaanaghe`,  
Naiva tushye`rchitorchaayam bhootagraamaavamaaninah. 3. 29. 24.*

The Lord also answered Devhuti’s questions about birth and death, with a clarity not easily found elsewhere. He said:

द्रव्योपलब्धिस्थानस्य द्रव्येक्षायोग्यता यदा ।  
तत्पञ्चत्वमहंमानादुत्पत्तिर्द्रव्यदर्शनम् ॥ ३.३१.४५  
*Dravyopalabdhisthaanasya dravyakshaayogyataa yadaa,  
Tatpanchatvamahamaanaadutpattirdravyadarshanam.  
3.31. 45.*

“The body has the ability to understand about external factors, just as an electric bulb has the capacity to light up with electricity. The body retains and responds to the subtle impressions caused by what it experiences. The body is considered dead when it loses this capacity. The five elements in the body merge into the five elements of the universe.

In the same way, when we begin to view anything as ‘I’, we are born in that object. We see a person in a dream. We are aware that that person cannot be ‘me’, but we start to identify with the dream body, anyway. In the same way, we believe some to be friend and some to be a foe.

We begin to think of past and future births, when we take a bath in the Ganga, because we identify with this body which is having a bath. Just as a person is born in the dream, a person is born in the waking state because of identification with his body. Birth is when we get detached from one body

and attached to another. The Lord Shri Krishna has explained this to Uddhavji, in the eleventh Skandha.

विषयाभिनिवेशेन नात्मानं यत् स्मरेत् पुनः ।  
जन्तोर्व कस्यच्छिद्रेतोर्मृत्युरत्यन्तविस्मृतिः ॥  
जन्म त्वात्मतया पुंसः सर्वभावेन भूरिद ।  
विषयस्वीकृतिं प्राहुर्यथा स्वप्नमनोरथः ॥ ११.२२.३८-३९

*Vishayaabhinive'she`na naatmaanam yat smare`tpunah,  
Jantorva kasyachidhe`tormrityuratyantavismritih.  
Janma tvaatmatayaa punsah sarvabhaave`na bhoorida,  
Vishayasveekriti praahuryathaa svapnamanorathah.  
11. 22. 38-39.*

While defining the essence of the Lord, Kapildevji said, “Take any object in your hand. For example, if you take a rose, your eyes will inform you that it is pink; your skin will inform you that it is soft; your tongue will reveal that it tastes bitter, and your nose will inform you of its fragrance. When it dries, and you crush it, your ears will inform you of the crackling sound it makes. Thus, although the rose is one object, your ears, skin, eyes, nose and tongue inform you about the qualities of sound, feel, appearance, smell and taste.

यथैन्द्रियैः पृथग्द्वारैरर्थो बहुगुणाश्रयः ।  
एको नानेयते तद्वद्भगवान् शास्त्रवर्त्मभिः ॥ ३.३२.३३  
*Yathaindriyaih prithgdvaarairartho bahugunaashrayah,  
E`ko naane`yate`tadvadbhagavaan shaastravartmabhih.  
3. 32. 33.*

The Lord is one, but people see Him colored by their own preferences, and He manifests with the sound, feel, appearance, taste, and fragrance of their imagination. The sacchidanandaghan\* may take on the form of Varaha, or Matsya\* - it is the same matter, sacchidananda. Just as you can design the gold you have, in the pattern of your choice, the Lord designs His forms as He wishes. The essence of the Lord is unchanging. He is everybody's Atman, and nothing truly exists, except the Atman.

With regard to detachment from the world, Kapildevji said that people tend to remain attached to sense objects and worldly pleasures, all their lives. Ultimately, everybody has to leave all they love behind, when they die. A person goes to heaven or hell, as per his deeds, and then he is reborn. He is thus ensnared in the cycle of birth and death. When in the womb, he swears

to do bhajan\* when he is born, but he forgets this pledge because he gets ensnared by Avidya.\*

नैकात्मतां मे स्पृहयन्ति केचिन्मत्पादसेवाभिरता मदीहाः ।  
येऽन्योन्यतो भागवताः प्रसज्य सभाजयन्ते मम पौरुषाणि ।।  
पश्यन्ति ते मे रुचिराण्यम्ब सन्तः प्रसन्नवक्रारुणलोचनानि ।  
रूपाणि दिव्यानि वरप्रदानि साकं वाचं स्पृहणीयां वदन्ति ।। ३.२५.३४-३५

*Naikaatmataam me`sprihayanti ke`chinmatpaadase`vaabhirataa madeehah,  
Ye`nyonyato bhaagavataah prasajya sabhaajayante`mama paurushaani.  
Pashyanti te`me`ruchiraanyamba santah prasannavakraaruna-lochanaani,  
Roopani divyaani varapradaani saakam vaacham sprihaneeyaam vadanti.  
3. 25. 34-35.*

That is why the Saints say, “Come, let us see the Lord with open eyes, and delight in Him. It is pointless to enter into the condition of advait\*. Of what use is Samadhi? Interaction is impossible in Samadhi, and anyway, we have no interest in worldly pleasures and problems. So, let four of us, intoxicated (by love for the Lord) people get together and delight in the Lord.”

When Saints get together, and consider the world to be the lotus feet of the Lord, they desire to serve it lovingly. Sometimes, they serve it as Hiranyagarbha\*, or Brahmalo\*, Goloka\*, or Saketaloka\*. Sometimes they serve the pragya\* form of the Lord, and sometimes they experience the turiyapada brahmatmaikya\*. All their actions are for the Lord. They spend all their time in discussing the actions and frolics of the Lord. The Lord’s smiling visage, with the eyes full of love, is always before their eyes. His smile bestows joy. They see the Lord clearly, and He talks to them as well. Their whole behavior becomes God-filled.

Kapildevji explained all the details and the science of Knowledge to His mother, Devhuti. He told her that the Atman and Paramatma are one, but seem separate, due to Avidya. Avidya means ignorance, nescience, and lack of proper understanding. Bhram is when we mistake something for something else, and agnan is when we totally lack knowledge. For example, if we see a rope, but don’t know what it is, it is our agnan. If we see a rope and mistake it to be a snake, that is our bhram. Agnan is the cause, and bhram is the result of all kinds of ignorance. Worldly people are caught up in the whirlpool of Avidya and bhram.

After giving His mother a detailed discourse, Kapildevji bowed to her, and went away to Gangasagar, where the sea welcomed Him.



Devhuti left the airship made by Kardamji and returned to her old life of austerity. She became completely unconcerned about her physical needs. Her handmaidens would feed and dress her. She was, at first, filled with anguish for her son, Kapildevji, but then she attained atmabodha\*. She became a liberated soul, totally free of sorrow.

The third Skandha of the Bhagwat thus narrates the episode of the Visarga-sarga – which means the incidents of the daiva sarga and the asura sarga. It contains the liberation of both men and women, but there is no description of Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu being liberated, even though they were the attendants of the Lord. No one can be liberated if a demonic tendency enters their mind. Liberation is only for those whose minds are filled with godly tendencies, whether they are men or women.

We now enter the fourth Skandha of the Bhagwat. It contains many excellent topics. Preachers tend to narrate them as mere stories. They do not try to grasp the subtle messages behind the stories. Their ego prevents them from seeking clarifications from learned people. However, I am hopeful that you will try to understand the significance of these stories.

The fourth Skandha is divided into four portions – Dharma\*, Artha\*, Kama\* and Moksha\*. The portion of Dharma is given in the first seven chapters, and contains the sapta tantu yagya. The next five chapters give the Artha portion. The Kamana\* portion is given in the following eleven chapters, and the Mukti portion in eight chapters, describing freedom from the Ashtadhaa Prakriti\*.

The Dharma portion explains that ritual worship is successful only when undertaken with devotion to the Lord and dependence upon Him. The sage Atri undertook several great Yagyas, doing them as a part of Dharma, and the Lord manifested as his son.

There is one episode, which is given in some other Puranas, but not in the Bhagwat. It is about an occasion when Sati\*, Laxmi\* and Savitri\* were discussing who the greatest Sati in the world was. Each felt that she deserved that title. Naradji came by and told them that the greatest sati in the world is Anasuya, the wife of Atri.

The one, who does not see people's faults, is called anasuya. Asuya means – गुणेषु दोषविष्करणं '*gune'shu doshaavishkaranam*', and anasuya means असूयारहितं '*asuyaarahitam*' – the one who gives birth to the Lord. Atri means the one who is free of the three Gunas. Another interpretation is अत्रैव अत्रि '*atraiva atri*' – who is here, and despite being here, is beyond the three Gunas; beyond the three stages of waking, sleeping and dreaming. That Paramatma, that Brahman, is called Atri. And Anasuya is the one who is filled with goodwill and does not see the faults.

When Savitri, Laxmi and Sati heard Naradji say that Anasuya is the greatest Sati, they requested their husbands, Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh, to test her devotion to Atri. When they went to Anasuya, she used her spiritual powers (obtained through her devotion to her husband) to turn them into her sons. Shankarji became Durvasa, Brahmaji became Chandrama\* and Vishnu became Dattatreya.

The purpose of this narration is to explain that worship is fulfilled when it is undertaken with devotion to the Lord. When undertaken with arrogance, the ritual worship does not succeed. The Daksha Yagya episode shows this clearly. Daksha was the personification of an inflated ego. He was the son of Brahmaji and the ruler of the Prajapatis\*, but his Yagya was unsuccessful because it was undertaken for the sake of vanity and publicity.

Now tomorrow, you will hear about the characters of Dhruva, Prithu, Prachinvarhi, and the Prachetas. Before these characters, you will hear about Sati and Daksha's Yagya.

Om Shantih! Shantih! Shantih!

## **BHAGWATAMRIT**

### **Pravarchan IV**

#### **(Skandha IV)**

Repetition results in greater absorption of the subject discussed. You were told, earlier, that the first Skandha of the Bhagwat is called the ‘Adhikari Skandha’. It describes the levels of suitability of the speakers and listeners, Suta-Shaunaka, Narad-Vyas, and Shuka-Parikshit. Some speak and listen as just a routine Dharma. Some for the benefit of the world, and some – who believe in the Nirguna form of the Lord, speak and listen to obtain Brahmatmaikya Bodha\*.

You were also told that the second Skandha is called the ‘Sadhan\* Skandha.’ It states that shravan\* is the main sadhan, and it has three branches – dhyan\*, shraddha and samadhan\*.

In the third Skandha, you heard about how the world’s population expands, and the divisions of the Asuras and Devtas. Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu are from the Asura population, and Kardam-Devhuti, Swaymbhuva Manu-Shatroopa’s lineage is from the demi-gods. The cause for all this is the Lord.

Now the fourth Skandha is before us. It is called the ‘Visarga Skandha’. Visarga means special, and full of variety. It describes what a human can achieve through a determined effort. It is the Lord who gives the visarga, so the Lord is described after describing the visarga.

As mentioned yesterday, the fourth Skandha of the Bhagwat contains four topics – Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha. Artha is outside us, is desired by all, and is prone to change. That which keeps moving away, which does not stay with one person, is called Artha. Kama stays in the mind. All our joys and sorrows and pleasures are in the mind. Kama is internal, whereas Artha is external. Dharma stays in the intellect, so that it can control both wealth and desire.

It is important to understand whether our desires are controlled by our knowledge (of what is right). Are we able to control our mind and sense organs at will? Does the vehicle of our body and mind have brakes or not? God knows where we’ll end up, if there are no brakes. So, we need the control of Dharma to be established in our intellect. If the intellect is alert and strong, we can enjoy and indulge safely with discrimination. If not, we will be trapped.

As for Moksha, it is a form of the Atman. We do not obtain it, we become aware of it. Our Atman is free from all divisions and separateness. All the perceived differences are illusions, created by our own lack of realization and awareness of the All-pervading Atman, who supports this mirage. The Atman is the sub-stratum, and the source of this projection. That is why the Atman is always liberated.

Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha are all achieved by purushartha\*. The word 'purushartha' is commonly used these days to indicate the qualities of a person who is active and hard working. In Sanskrit, however, it is the object of human desire which is called purushartha – पुरुषैः अर्थ्यते इति पुरुषार्थः 'purushaih arthyate` iti purushrthah'. Thus we understand what it is that we desire. Do we desire wealth, or sensual pleasures, or righteousness, or liberation? What does our intellect lead us towards? Which direction is our life moving in?

What is the message of the first seven chapters (of the fourth Skandha) which speak of Dharma? Dharma is dhriti pradhan\*. It is the same root of dhri, which creates the word dharma and also the word dhriti. When Manuji wrote the treatise upon Manav Dharma\*, he wrote dhriti first, as in धृतिः क्षमा दमोऽस्तेयं शौचमिन्द्रियनिग्रहः *dhriti kshamaa damoaste`yam shauchamindriyanigrahah`*. So, the mental ability to hold on to what is right, is called Dharma.

Now, consider whether Daksha's Yagya has Dharma or not. Daksha was the King of the Prajapatis\*. He was the son of Brahma, a learned and powerful Brahmin who had undertaken tapasya. The Court was in session, with Brahma, Shiva, and others already seated, when Daksha strode in as the King. Everyone stood up in respect, except Brahma and Shankarji\*.

Dhaksha thought to himself, "It is proper for Brahmaji to not get up, since he is my father. Shiva, however, is younger than me. I allowed him to marry my daughter, at the behest of my father Brahmaji, but that still makes him my junior. He should stand up when I enter." Daksha began to hurling abuses at Shankarji, feeling that he had been insulted in public. An arrogant man loses his mental balance if he feels slighted.

सभामध्ये मानभगात् बुद्धिभ्रंशो भवेत् ध्रुवम्।

*Sabhaamadhye` maanabhangaat buddhibhransho bhave`t dhruvam.*

The enraged Daksha spoke abusively about Shakarji's behavior. Those who felt that Shankarji had done nothing wrong began to retort. Both sides started to curse each other. The Shaivas\* and the Vaishnavas\* began to quarrel with

each other. The Vaishnavas declared that anyone who worshipped Shiva would be demeaned, and the Shaivites declared that whoever worshipped Vishnu would be demeaned.

Shankarji, however, refused to participate in all this quarrelling. He said, “Do what you want, I am leaving”, and walked out quietly. He said nothing to his wife, Sati, when he reached home. He felt it would only distress her. One should never cause distress. One should absorb all thoughts likely to cause sorrow or agitation, whether it is among friends, or within the family. So, Shankarji remained silent about what had happened, and began to do bhajan. The matter was forgotten.

How could Daksha rest in peace? He organized a Yagya with the intention of insulting Shankarji. A Yagya motivated by jealousy, or hatred, or competitiveness, can never give good results. How can it be Dharma, if the cause itself is wrong? Daksha invited all the demigods to his Yagya, but deliberately left out Shankarji.

When Satiji heard that her father has organized a great Yagya, and all the devatas were going, she wanted to go, too. She spoke about this to Shankarji, referring to the passages of Dharma which said that there is no harm in going uninvited to the home of the father, husband or guru. “So, I will go,” she stated. “All my sisters will be going; my mother and father will both be there. It will be a great pleasure to meet everybody.”

Shankarji tried to warn her, “You see, Devi\*, there is no harm in going if the invitation is not sent due to an oversight. Where the lack of an invitation is deliberate, and due to a sullied heart, then one should not go to such a function.”

In case of a dispute between husband and father, a woman’s duty is to side with her husband, because her life is linked to his. Satiji was annoyed when Shankarji told her not to go. She looked at him with such anger that it seemed as if she would burn him to cinders. Ultimately, she decided to go alone. When she came to the front door, the attendants brought her Shivaji’s vehicle, the bull. When she rode on the bull behind Shankarji, she looked very dignified, but now she mounted him alone. The bull – vrishabha – is not only the vehicle of Shakti\*, it is Dharma itself. It is Vivek (Discrimination) and Gnan, (knowledge), accompanying Shakti. Shakti should always be accompanied by discrimination and knowledge. Dharma gets divided when Shakti is separated from Gnan.

Having ignored Shankarji’s words, Sati came to Daksha’s Yagya, but she was not welcomed. Her mother spoke affectionately, but her sisters laughed with derision, and Daksha didn’t meet her at all.

Shocked by this reception, Sati went to the Yagya mandap\*. She noticed that no seat had been kept for Shankarji, and understood why no invitation had been sent to them. She also understood why Shankarji wanted to stop her from coming. Anger rose in her and she began to tell her father a few home truths. The Vaishnavas should pay heed to one point raised by her:

यद्द्वयक्षरं नाम गिरेरितं नृणां  
सकृत्प्रसङ्गादघमाशु हन्ति तत्।

पवित्रकीर्ति तमलघ्यशासनं

भवानहो द्वेष्टि शिवं शिवेतरः॥ ४.४.१४

*Yaddvayaksharam naama gire`ritam nrinaam*

*Sakritprasangaadaghamaashu hanti tat,*

*Pavitrakeerti tamalangyashaasanam*

*Bhavaanaho dve`shti shivam shive`tarah.*

4.4.14.

“Father, just see – it is a name of just two syllables – ‘shi-va’. If a person takes this name just once, for whatever reason, he gets free from sin and suffering. But you see him – my Lord, who is beyond all worldly regulations – with hatred in your eyes. That proves that it is you who is inauspicious. I do not wish to have a body which is born of such a father. If I return, and Shankarji addresses me as the daughter of Daksha, I will die of mortification.”

Saying this, Sati created yogagni\* and burnt herself to ashes in the yagyashala\* itself. There was an uproar. The attendants who had accompanied Satiji began to vent their fury by breaking up everything in the vicinity. Bhriguji chanted a mantra which induced all the Brahmins to side with Daksha, and send Shankarji’s attendants off.

Shankarji had gone into deep meditation, after Satiji defied him and left. Many days passed, and Shankarji thought that she would return when she wants to, after enjoying the company of her family. So, he was quite relaxed. The attendants who had gone with Satiji had not told him of what transpired at the Yagya. They were ashamed that they had helped her to go, against his wishes, and even accompanied her. Further, that they had been thrashed and dispatched after she burnt herself by the yogagni. So, they did not have the moral courage to face him.

Many days later, Naradji came to Shankarji and asked about Satiji. “She has gone to her father’s house,” Shankarji told him.

“Has gone, or had gone?” asked Naradji, and told him the whole story.

Bhagwan Shankar's temper flared up when he heard this. Just as people claw at their body in anger, Shankarji pulled out a hair from his head and threw it. It turned into Veerbhadra, who went to Daksha's Yagya and broke it up. The Shivamahimnastotra\* has a long verse about this:

क्रियादक्षो दक्षः क्रतुपतिरधीशस्तनुभृताम्  
ऋषीणामात्विज्यं शरणद सदस्याः सुरगणाः ।  
क्रतुभ्रंशस्त्वत्तः क्रतुफलविधानव्ययनिनो  
ध्रुवं कर्तुः श्रद्धाविधुररमभिचाराय हि मखाः ॥

*Kriyaadaksho dakshah kratupatiradheeshastanubhritaam  
Risheenaamartvijyam sharanada sadasyaah suraganaah,  
Kratubhranshatvattah kratufalavidhaanavyasanino  
Druvam kartuh shraddhaavidhuramabhichaaraaya hi makhaah.*

A project undertaken with devotion is fulfilled, but one which lacks devotion, and is motivated by jealousy, hatred, or a desire to demean, will never be fulfilled. So, Daksha's Yagya was destroyed by the very Lord who gives the reward of the worship.

Veerabhadra tore off the beards of those who had laughed when he broke up the Yagya. He broke the teeth of those who had bared their teeth at him. He placed Daksha's head into the ritual fire, where the sacrificial animal's head is placed. The great devotees who had participated in the Yagya scurried, bruised and battered, to apprise Brahmaji of the latest development. Brahmaji is the grandfather of all beings. He is the demigod for Shanti\*. He took everybody along, and went to Shankarji.

Shankarji is Ashutosh\*, too. He told Brahmaji, "Daksha is but a child. I do not take him seriously – नाघं प्रजेश बालानां वर्णये नानुचिन्तये 'naagham praje'sha baalaanaam varnaye`naanuchintaye`'. He forgave Daksha. Since Daksha's head had been burnt in the sacrificial fire, a goat's head was attached to his body.

Even if you consider this sheer imagination, what an incredible feat of surgery it would be, to attach a head to another's body! Such descriptions are also to be found in the Upanishads. The Ashwini Kumars had cut off the head of Dadhichi\*, and he gave a sermon through the head of a horse. Those who do not believe in the practice of knowledge being handed down from generation to generation interpret the Vedas at whim, but that is not the authentic interpretation.

So, Shankarji arranged for a goat's head to be attached to Daksha's burnt head. A goat's beard was attached to Bhriguji's chin. Poosha was told that his stomach would be filled by the food eaten by the person who undertook a

Yagya in future. Then the Lord Vishnu appeared at the Yagya, and was praised by all the demigods. The ritual of Daksha's Yagya was concluded in the proper manner.

Dharma is successful only when connected with the Lord. The Lord is the Creator, Sustainer and Destroyer of the whole world. A person who has no reverence for the Lord may undertake ritual worship, thinking it to be Dharma, but it will not bring the desired results. The Lord is the one who bestows the fruit of Dharma. Action is inanimate, and is carried out by the organs of action, which are also inanimate by themselves. Hence, it is not possible for any ritual to be fruitful unless there is faith in the bestower of the fruit.

The seven chapters in the fourth Skandha are the seven steps of the Yagya. They are used to describe the stories which reveal the essence of Dharma. Kama and Artha are both controlled by Dharma. A person who is not guided by righteousness will eat, drink, speak, and do whatever he feels like. His life will lack self control. It will also be disorganized and undisciplined.

The dharna Shakti\* of Dharma is required for a well regulated life. Everything has Dharma. The mango tree and the jasmine creeper have their Dharma about how to grow and when to bloom. All particles have their own Dharma. Whatever lacks Dharma is destroyed. An object is protected by its own Dharma, its own right pattern of existence.

The topic of Artha comes next. You are aware that Swayambhuva Manu had two sons – Uttanapada and Priyavrata. Of the two, Uttanapada rose to great heights. He had access to all. He had two wives – one was Suniti and the other was Suruchi. The wife who is ethical is called Suniti. A King should walk the ethical path. The wife, who pleases the King by agreeing with his every inclination, is called Suruchi. The King who walks the path of self-indulgence does beget a son (result), which seems to be good, but does not bring lasting good. It is ultimately destroyed. The King guided by Suniti gets a son like Dhruva, resulting in great benefits. Dhruva means that which endures, which is never destroyed. Suniti means sunder (beautiful) + niti (principles), and suruchi means sunder+ruchi (desirability).

King Uttanapada preferred Suruchi to Suniti. One day, he sat with Uttam – the son of Suruchi – on his lap, when Dhruva – the son of Suniti – approached, and wanted to sit on his father's lap, too. However, Uttanapada did not welcome him; nor did he lift him up on his lap. Suruchi told Dhruva, "Son, if you wish to sit on your father's lap, go and worship the Lord; Use the spiritual powers you gain, to enter my womb. You will attain the throne when you are born as my son."



तपसाऽऽराध्य पुरुषं तस्यैवानुग्राहेण मे।

गर्भे त्वं साध्यात्मानं यदीच्छसि नृपासनम्॥ ४.८.१३

*Tapasaaraadhya purusham tasyaivaanugrahe`na me`,*

*Garbhe` tvam saadhyaatmaanam yadeechchasi nripaasanam. 4.8.13.*

Just note one point. Suruchi did not tell Dhruva that he would attain his father's lap through the Lord's worship. What she said was, "After you worship the Lord and die, you will obtain the entry to my womb, and only when you are born as my son, will you reach the throne."

Suruchi's words were an insult to the Lord's worship, power, and manifestation. What she indicated was that obtaining her womb was the primary objective, and worship of the Lord was the means for attaining it.

Hearing these words from his step-mother, poor Dhruva began to cry, because he longed to sit on his father's lap. Weeping bitterly, he went to his mother, Suniti. Servants had already reported the incident to her. Even after hearing everything, there was no envy in Suniti's heart. Nor did she find fault with the King. She spoke without agitation, "My son – सपत्न्याऽभिहितः पन्थाः 'sapatnyaabhihitah panthaah' - what my saut\* has said is indeed the best path for you. It is the Lord who has given your father his status. Your grandfather, Swayambhuva Manu, also got his status from the Lord. It is quite true that you cannot obtain this status unless you worship the Lord. So go, my dear, and worship Him."

As soon as he heard his mother's words, Dhruva resolved to worship the Lord. True to his decision, he left the palace. See the Leela of the Lord. Obstacles are removed automatically from the path of those who are headed towards the Lord. Moreover, the path, too, is made easier for them.

Dhruva encountered Naradji as soon as he left the palace. At first, Naradji said, "My child, you are so young! Respect and insult should not affect little children. Why are you getting influenced by the innate nature of a warrior? This world is such that respect and disdain are routine for everyone. One should disregard them, and carry on."

Dhruva replied, "No, Sir. My Mother and my Stepmother have both said that I should worship the Lord. This is why I left home. See my good fortune – the moment I step out of my house, the Lord sends you to me. I am the son of a Kshatriya\*. I will not turn back until I have attained my goal, even if it takes me several births."

Please note that Dhruva did not bow down to Naradji. A child has no need for formal etiquette, so Dhruva's behavior was natural and simple. Naradji was impressed by Dhruva's resolution. He immediately gave the dvaadashakshara mantra\* to Dhruva, and taught him how to do japa\*. He

directed Dhruva to the river Yamuna. “There is a forest near Mathura, called the Madhuvan. Stay there and worship the Lord.”

Dhruva undertook a worship of great hardship. At first he took only fruits and flowers. Then he sustained only on water, and then only on air, and ultimately, he even stopped breathing, as he stood on one foot in ascetic worship. The air within the individual was immersed in the universal air. Dhruva lost all consciousness of individuality. Hence, when he stopped breathing, it affected the breath of all beings. This frightened the Devtas, and they rushed to the Lord.

The Lord reassured them, saying that He would make sure that Dhruva’s tapasya would end soon. Then the Lord mounted His eagle, Garuda – who symbolizes the word – and manifested in His four armed form before Dhruva. In His four hands were the Shankha\*, Chakra\*, Gada\* and Padma\*. Dhruva, however, was in deep meditation and his eyes were closed. So, the Lord drew away His image in Dhruva’s heart. Dhruva’s eyes opened. He saw the Lord before him, granting the vision of His four armed form. Dhruva was stunned by the Lord’s beauty. His eyes were filled with tears, his body began to tingle, his throat felt choked, and his heart was overcome with love for the Lord. He fell at the Lord’s feet, wanting to eulogize the Lord. The Lord understood his wish, and touched Dhruva’s cheek with His Shankha. The Lord’s conch shell is the personification of the sound of the Vedas, पस्पर्श बालं कृपया कपोले ‘pasparsha baalam kripayaa kapole’.

What is the Shankha? शं खे छिद्रे यस्य असौ शंखः ‘Sham khe` chidre` yasya asau shankhah’ – that, which contains peace within its surface openings, is called Shankha. At the touch of the Shankha, Dhruva acquired knowledge about the Lord. He folded his hands and began to speak:

योऽन्तः प्रविश्य मम वाचमिमां प्रसुप्तां  
संजीवयत्यखिलशक्तिधरः स्वधाम्ना ।  
अन्यांश्च हस्तचरणश्रवणत्वगादीन्  
प्राणान्नमो भगवते पुरुषाय तुभ्यम् ।। ४.९.६

*Yoantah pravishya mama vaachamimaam prasuptaam  
Sanjeevayatyakhilashaktidharah svadhaamna,  
Anyaansha hastacharanashravanatvagaadeen  
Praanaannamo bhagavate` purushaaya tubhyam.  
4.9.6.*

“Lord, You are seated in my heart. You awaken my slumbering power of speech, and enable me to speak. You uphold all my powers and abilities. My

hands and feet move with Your strength. My skin is able to feel, thanks to You, and my eyes see because of Your power. You are never far from me. This is the stotra\* by which You can be caught. The world does not begin from where we think it begins; the world begins from where we begin to feel. This is its way. The past, present and future tenses all begin where my 'I' is, just as the Lord who abides in all hearts, is seated in my heart. The rest is nothing but agnan\*.

या निर्वृतिस्तनुभृतां तव पादपद्मध्यानाद्भवज्जनकथाश्रवणेन या स्यात्।

सा ब्रह्मणि स्वमहिमन्यपि नाथ मा भूत् किं त्वन्तकासिलुलितात्पततां विमानात्॥ ४.९.१०

Ya nirvritistanubhirtaam tava  
 paadapadmadyaanaadbhavajjanakathaashravane`na yaa syaat,  
 Sa brahmani svamahimanyapi naatha maa bhoot kim  
 tvantakaasilulitaatpatataam vimaanaat  
 4.9.10

Lord, the people in heaven fall off their airplanes, when their time is up. They are afraid that death will occur any moment. However, if we get engrossed in meditating upon Your lotus feet, and listen to discourses about You, given lovingly by Your devotees, we experience a deep joy, the like of which is not experienced even in Brahmnananda\*.”

Brahmananda is shantananda\*, but vishayanand\* is, of course, vikshepananda\*. The smaran\* and discussions of the Lord, are free of both vikshep and samadhi. It is to experience the bliss of a Brahman who is alive and awake, who walks and interacts. It is not the happiness of intoxication and unconsciousness; nor the pleasure of sense objects. In this, you can listen, and go on listening, and continue to experience the joy of the Divine. It is like an immediate cash reward, with tears of joy, a joyful tingling of the body, a heart brimming with love, and a mental absorption in the Paramananda\*.

When Dhruva eulogized the Lord thus, He granted him a boon, saying, “I give you a position which even your Grandfather Swayambhuva Manu could not attain, and nor could your Father, Uttanapada. Not only these two, but none else have attained, and nor will any attain in future.”

See what results worship can bring! Dhruva was given everything he had prayed for, and every need of his path was fulfilled. Yet, his heart was filled with regret, as he returned home. He had obtained everything he desired but he rued the fact that he could have asked for the Lord, Himself, instead of praying for worldly boons.

Dhruva was welcomed with great warmth when he reached his city. He first met Uttam's mother, Suruchi, telling her that she was his first Guru. "It was upon your advice, that I worshipped the Lord," he said. Then the King, Uttanapada, handed over the Crown to Dhruva, and went into the forest to meditate. Dhruva began to rule and was called 'Rajarshi'\*

A strange incident occurred after this. Suruchi's son, Uttam, had gone on a hunt, and was killed by a Yaksha\*. Suruchi went to look for him and was burnt to ashes.

This is the fate of suruchi – it is always transient. Worldly pleasures never last. What we consider to be real and excellent, turn out to be just the opposite after some time. The only everlasting and unchanging factor is the Paramatma.

When Dhruva heard that the Yaksha had killed his brother, his attachment to his brother welled up. Dhruva's worldly attachments had not been destroyed by his worship, since he had worshipped only for worldly benefits. Now he was overcome with anger, and he attacked the Yakshas with his army. A fierce battle ensued. Dhruva was about to use the Narayanastra\*, which would burn all the Yakshas to cinders, but just then his Grandfather, Swayambhuva Manu came there. Manuji told Dhruva that he should not allow anger to overcome his better sense – अलम् वत्सातिरोषेण '*alam vatsaatiroshe`na`*'. Anger is a sin.

Krodha blocks the spring of joy in our hearts. Anger comes with the purpose of blocking the Paramananda, which springs from our eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin, to fill our lives. Anger's nature is such that it first burns the heart in which it flares up.

Swayambhuva Manu said, "Son, you have had a vision of the Lord. Why should you harbor such anger in your heart? One Yaksha wronged your brother, but you want to kill all the Yakshas. Why don't you understand that neither did your brother kill the Yaksha, nor did the Yaksha kill your brother? All that is going on is the play of the Lord. So, call an end to the war, and see how pleased the Lord becomes."

तितिक्षया करुणया मैत्र्या चाखिलजन्तुषु।

समत्वेन च सर्वात्मा भगवान् सम्प्रसीदति॥ ४.११.१३

*Titikshayaa karunayaa maitryaa chaakhilajantushu,*

*Samatve`na cha sarvaatmaa bhagavaan sampraseedati.*

4.11.13.

Having forbearance towards our seniors, compassion towards our juniors, friendship for equals, and equanimity towards all creatures, is the best way to please the Lord.

You see, the company and advice of Mahatmas achieves what even a vision of the Lord can't achieve. The reason is that the Lord is present, but intangible, and the Mahatma is present, and is tangible, and on the same earth. This phenomenon is found in many incidents, in the Bhagwat. Twelve bhagwats\* are described in the Shrimad Bhagwat, of which Swayambhuva Manu is one. He successfully quietened Dhruva's anger. Kuber, the King of the Yakshas, came and offered his hand in friendship. A strong bond of affection grew between Kuber and Dhruva. Kuber granted him a boon, that he would have unshaken devotion for the Lord.

Dhruvaji then handed over his kingdom to his son, and went to the forest to do tapasya. Ultimately, the Lord sent an airplane, with attendants, for Dhruva. Dhruvaji took a bath in the Yamuna, completed all the evening rituals, and prepared to get on to the plane. Death came, and stood before him. "I am Death. I come to every creature who is born and who has a body. This is my duty, my Dharma."

"Come", said Dhruvaji. When she came close, he placed his foot on her head and got on to the plane. The significance of getting on the plane sent by the Lord is to become free of ego. Only a person who is free of ego can get on to the plane of God. The plane is unable to bear the weight of vanity or arrogance.

When Dhruva attained his land, Naradji thought one day, about how he had given the mantra and guidance, which enabled Dhruva to obtain a vision of the Lord and then the Dhruvaloka\*. "Let me go and see how my disciple is faring," he thought, and went to Dhruva. To his surprise, he saw tears fall steadily from Dhruva's eyes.

"Dhruva, why do you weep?" asked Naradji. Dhruva replied, "Sir, I attained the Lord and asked only for Dhruvaloka! I did not ask for the Lord! I weep because I regret my folly." Naradji was happy to hear this answer and went round telling people how true a devotee Dhruva was.

Utkal was a son of Dhruva, who became an ascetic. He was continuously immersed in the experience of the oneness of the Atma and the Brahman. He refused to accept the throne. Dhruva's second son, Vatsar, was crowned when Dhruva went away to the forest.

Later on, in the same lineage, there was a King called Anga. He was wedded to the grand daughter (daughter's daughter) of Death. What will be the condition of the home in which Death's grand daughter comes? What will her child be like? This is the reason our scriptures advise us to examine the

lineage of the bride. The background of her family should be checked, before she is accepted, since the temperament of her parents and Grandparents, all leave their impact upon her.

At first, Anga's wife did not have any sons. He consulted the Brahmins and undertook a Putreshti Yagya\*, and had a son. The son, called Vena, had inherited the temperament of his mother's father. He loved to harass people, even as a child. A Raja\* is one who gives ranjan\* to his people. The Dharma Shastras\* state clearly, that the King who sees to the good of his people, has devansha\*, but the King who harasses his people is a rakshasa\*.

प्रजाहितकरो राजा देवांशोऽन्यश्च राक्षसः ।

*Prajaahitakaro raajaa de`vanshoanyashcha raakshasah.*

Raja Vena was like a demon. People saw death wherever he went. His father, Anga, tried in every possible way, to make him mend his ways, but he paid no heed. Anga lamented, in deep anguish, to have such a wicked person born into their noble lineage.

One day, a quality inherited from Dhruva, arose in Anga's mind. He said, "God is good, to give me a wicked son. If my son had been good, I would have been trapped by my affection for him. Now I can become totally detached from the world, and do bhajan." Saying this, he left the Kingdom, and went to the forest to do bhajan.

When Vena was crowned King, he had it announced throughout his realm, that henceforth, all ritual worships and giving alms to the poor were forbidden. He banned every activity pertaining to Dharma.

न यष्टव्यं न दातव्यं न होतव्यं द्विजाः क्वचित् ।

इति न्यवारयद्धर्मं भैरीघोषेण सर्वशः ॥ ४.१४.६

*Na yashtavyam na daatavyam na hotavyam dvijaah kvachit,*

*Iti nyavaarayaddharmam bhaireeghoshe`na sarvashah.*

4.14.6.

When a person protects Dharma, Dharma also protects him – धर्मो रक्षति रक्षितः 'dharma rakshati rakshitah'. The word Dharma is interpreted in two ways, in the Sanskrit language. The first is ध्रियते जनैः इति धर्मः 'dhriyate` janaih iti dharmah' – Dharma is what people uphold in their lives. The second definition is:

धर्मः पुण्यः यमः स्वभावाचारसोमपाः ।

*Dharmah punyah yamah svabhaavaachaarasomapaah.*

That, which protects the people, is called Dharma.

Vena put a stop to all activities which good people approve of. People were full of fear. Seeing how matters stood, the learned people, Brahmins, and Mahatmas, called a meeting to decide what should be done. How can people be saved if there is no Dharma? “We should go to Vena and warn him,” they decided. So, they went to him in a large group.

“Your Majesty,” they said, “It is Dharma which protects you. We are concerned that your Dharma may be destroyed.”

Vena told them that they were great fools – बालिशा बत यूयं वा ‘baalishaa bata yuyam vaa’. “I organize your food, water and housing. I am the father who guides your activities. I am the Lord of the world. Who are you, to believe in any other God but me?”

The group of wise men made an angry sound – hunh – of disdain, and Vena died with the impact. The Mahatmas departed, but Vena’s mother, Suneetha, had his body lifted up and preserved.

Who was to control the people, now? If there is a King who is righteous, undertakes religious rituals, and leads an exemplary life, then he leads the people on the righteous path. The lack of a ruler brought anarchy to the land. People began to do whatever they pleased. Dacoits and thieves increased rapidly. नश्येत् त्रयी दण्डनीति हतायाम् ‘Nashye’t trayee dandaneeti hataayaam’ - when there is no one to punish the wrongdoers, then the eternal laws of the Vedas disappear. It is difficult to control people when there is no threat of punishment, because people indulge fearlessly in lawlessness.

The Mahatmas were filled with anxiety when they saw this anarchy. They churned Vena’s body. Out of his arms emerged Prithu, and his wife, symbolizing the Paalini Shakti\*, and were crowned King and Queen. They were congratulated by the people. The Devtas each gave their powers to Prithu, as an offering. The hungry and thirsty people came up to Prithu during the crowning ceremony, praying for succor. A King’s first duty is to ensure that his people have food and water.

Prithu asked the people, “Where does the grain, which grows from the Earth, go?” The people replied that it dissolves into the Earth. “There is no ploughing, no planting of seeds. Then, how can the earth give grain? That is why people snatch and steal whatever they can.”

Prithu picked up his arrow and chased the Earth. The significance of this is that he took up all the implements used for farming, declaring that he would dig up and sift every little patch of land. The Earth folded her hands and said, “Sir, whatever you desire, please milk me for it.”

Please note that Prithu did not show any preference about who should get food and who shouldn't. He organized food for all creatures, including snakes scorpions, Yakshas, Rakshases, and Devtas. He protected the seed of all. He organized that water should be available for growing crops even in arid areas. He leveled the land, breaking down little hillocks and large mounds. He tilled the hardened earth and softened it with water. He organized, in accordance with the science given in our scriptures, how and where villages, towns, districts and cities should be built. Thus, Prithu took care of all the arrangements for all the needs of all his people. The people were overjoyed to have all their needs fulfilled. When all were satisfied and happy, Prithu organized a Yagya. The Yagya involves both aadaan and pradaan. Aadaan is to take from those who have a store of wealth and pradaan is to give to the needy.

Indra tried to place obstacles in Prithu's Yagya. He repeatedly did all kinds of foul mischief to prevent its successful completion. He stole the Yagya's horse. Ultimately, Prithu got angry and decided to kill Indra. Brahmaji explained to him, that Indra is the Yagya Devta, the Lord of the Yagya, the Yagya's inspiration. He is the one who stands by and helps in carrying out the ritual, and he is the one who accepts the oblations. It is not proper to kill him.

The Lord Vishnu appeared, and interceded between Prithu and Indra. He said, क्षमापयत आत्मानममुष्य क्षन्तुमर्हसि “*Kshamaapayata aatmaanamamushya kshantumarhasi*” - Prithu, Indra has come to seek your forgiveness. Forgive him.”

After that, Prithu and Indra became good friends. They embraced each other warmly, and worshipped the Lord with reverence. Prithu caught the feet of the Lord, as He prepared to depart. Tears fell from his eyes, as he held the Lord's feet lovingly.

The Lord told Prithu to ask for a boon. “What do you desire?” He asked. Prithu replied, “What more could I desire – You are the greatest boon! When I have obtained You, what item should I ask for? To ask You for a boon is like a girl wanting to marry a particular man, and that man offers to get her married to whoever she wishes to marry! However, if You insist, then I ask for ten thousand ears, through which I can listen to talks about Your glories.”

विधत्स्व कर्णायुतमेष मे वरः।

*Vidhatsva karnnaayutame`sha me` varah.*



The fact, is, my brother, that the world enters our hearts not so much through our eyes, as much as through our ears. That is why the world will be unable to enter, if our hearts are filled with thoughts of the Lord. This world is not made up of bricks and stones; it is the illusion of ‘me’ and ‘mine’ which creates our world. Shri Shankaracharya Maharaj says:

कर्तृत्वभोक्तृत्वलक्षणः संसारः।

*Karttritvabhoktritvalakshanah sansaarah.*

“The egoistic feeling of doership and enjoyership is called the sansar\*. Release from ‘me’ and ‘mine’, therefore, is release from the world. A person leads the life of a liberated soul when he is free of the world.”

Prithu gave his people a sermon on Dharma, after obtaining a vision of the Lord. It is one of the duties of a King, to educate his people, apart from maintaining law and order, and collecting taxes. Prithu undertook to educate his people, and gave a sermon to all in his realm. He told them to have faith in the Lord, and carry out their allotted duties with the attitude of worshipping the Lord through their work.

Now, all Prithu’s tasks were completed. He undertook ninety nine Yagyas, but got the reward of one hundred Yagyas. When a Yagya is sakaam\*, there is an urgency to complete it. However, when a Yagya is nishkaam\*, there is no such necessity. Since Prithu’s Yagyas had no worldly motive, the Lord completed the hundredth Yagya for him.

The Sanakadi Mahatmas then came to Prithu, to fulfill his life and aspirations. Prithu rose from his throne when he saw them enter the Court. He made them sit upon his throne, and welcomed them with full honors.

Prithu had an outstanding personality. He was tall and well built, fair complexioned, with long arms. He spoke with such eloquence that his people listened enthralled, when he spoke to them. Every word of his seeped into their hearts. This excellent King stood up respectfully when the Mahatmas came. He asked, “Sirs, how do I enquire whether all is well with you, because –

भवत्सु कुशलप्रश्न आत्मारामेषु नेष्यते।

*Bhavatsu kushalaprashna aatmaaraame`shu nse`shyate`.*

There is no desire in you, to enjoy worldly pleasures, so how do I ask what you acquired and what you missed? How do I ask what you possess and what you lack? You are unconcerned with mental and physical comforts. Since you have graced me by coming here, please tell me what I should do

for my ultimate good. The people have chosen me to be their representative, so on their behalf and my own, I ask you to tell us which is the way for the well being of all.”

तदहं कृतविश्रम्भः सुहृदो वस्तपस्विनाम्।

संपृच्छे भव एतस्मिन् क्षेमः केनाजंसा भवेत्॥ ४.२२.१५

*Tadaham kritavishrambhah suhrido vastapasvinaam,*

*Samprichche` bhava e`tasmin kshe`mah ke`naanjasaa bhave`t.*

4. 22. 15.

In their sermon to Prithu, the Sanakadis said, “Our lives should contain religious rituals, celibacy, non-violence and goodwill for all creatures. We should also experience the presence of the Lord in everything. जगतामथ तस्थुषां च ‘Jagataamatha tasthusaam cha’ - the Lord is seated in the hearts of all the creatures in creation. तमवेहि सोऽस्मि ‘Tamave`hi sosmi’ - you should also feel that the Lord is your true Self.

Just think about the meaning of this attitude, that I am a servant of the Lord, and everyone else is His form. The meaning behind this is, “I see you as God, and you see me as God.” Each sees the Lord in the heart of the other.

The fact is that nothing exists, except God. People suffer because their minds are filled with different names, beliefs and desires.

You have to understand that a samaadhi can achieve a state where the mind is free of all differences of name and form. However, samaadhi cannot erase the deep impression of the mind. These must be erased at source.

And, to achieve this, one needs the guidance of a Sadguru\*, who can make us understand the purport of the Vedas. It requires these factors, to make us understand how worthless our sanskaars\* are. Beliefs are required to detach people from their worldly, misguided attachments. Sanskaaras are also a sadhan. The purpose of beliefs is not to create an inanimate, obstinate machine with a rigid mindset. Sanskaaras are to be given up once they have fulfilled their purpose of controlling wrong tendencies. The tattvagnan of the Paramatma is required to enable one to give up the sanskaaras.”

When the Sanakadis enlightened Prithu with these words, he and his wife adopted the Vanaprastha Ashrama\*.

A part of this story, which is found elsewhere, but not given in the Bhagwat, says that Prithu was amazed when he saw how beautiful the forest was. After accepting the Vanaprastha Ashrama, he and his wife left the palace and went into the forest to meditate. The forest was like a beautifully landscaped park, with a lake. He wondered who could have put in so much

work, to beautify the forest like this. His investigation revealed that it was Nishat, his elder brother, who had emerged from Vena's body before Prithu emerged. Nishat had worked quietly, to beautify the forest area in Prithu's kingdom. He respected his younger brother, Prithu, so greatly, that he would secretly build dams on rivers, create lakes, and facilitate agriculture. Despite doing so much, he did not present himself before Prithu.

Prithu found out where Nishat lived, and went to him. He embraced Nishat warmly, and said, "Brother Nishat, all the magnificence in my kingdom is due to your greatness. You did the work and I got the credit. My elder, Brother, you are truly great!"

After that, Nishatraj served for the rest of their days. Then they went to the land of the Lord.

King Prachinverhi was a descendent of Prithu, and was very fond of doing Yagyas. He undertook so many Yagyas that if the total quantity of the kusha grass (placed for the Yagya) were to be calculated, it would be enough to cover the surface of the entire Earth!

King Prachinverhi had ten sons, who were called the Prachetas. When they asked Prachinverhi what he wanted them to do, he told them to expand the kingdom and increase the population.

The Prachetaganas\* went to the Narayana sarovara\*, where they heard some beautiful music, and were fascinated by the sound. The Lord Gaurishankar\* manifested on a bull, before them. When the Prachetas had praised and worshipped the Lord Gaurishankar, they gave a mantra to the Prachetas –

जितं त आत्मविद्भुर्य स्वस्तये स्वस्तिरस्तु मे।

भवता राधसा राद्धं सर्वस्या आत्मने नमः॥ ४.२४.३३

*Jitam ta aatmaviddhurya svastaye`svastirastu me`,*

*Bhavataa raadhasaa raaddham sarvasyaa aatmane`namah.*

4. 24. 33.

The Lord Shankar told the Prachetas to chant this mantra, and also taught them a beautiful verse eulogizing the Lord Vishnu. The Prachetas went to the sea shore, where they worshipped the Lord Vishnu for several years.

While the Prachetas were away, Naradji came to King Prachinverhi as he was busy with his Yagya, and asked what the King hoped to gain through the Yagyas. Prachinverhi replied that he was confused about what he should do for his salvation. His priests had told him that he should do Yagyas, which is why he kept undertaking this religious ritual, without knowing exactly what they would bring him. "I do not understand these matters. I only know this activity," he said.

“Please look up at the sky,” said Naradji.

Prachinvarhi looked up and beheld that the sky was full of ferocious animals, with weapons in their hands. He asked Naradji what this meant. Naradji told Prachinvarhi that these were the animals that had been sacrificed in his Yagyas, and were waiting to avenge themselves.

One interpretation of sacrificial animals is the oppressed people who are forced to contribute towards a ritual. People suffer when they are made to contribute to the expenses of a Yagya. So, every undertaking should be carried out with consideration and justice. Shrimad Bhagwat is a Vaishnav Purana\*, so the practice of animal sacrifice is criticized from the beginning to the end.

Prachinvarhi was terrified. “What will happen to me?” he asked piteously. Naradji then narrated the Puranjanopakhkyana\* to Prachinvarhi, explaining the fate of the average human.

Naradji explained that the jeeva\* and the Ishwara\* are inseparable companions. Just as Shri Krishna and Arjuna, Rama and Laxmana, are always named together, the names of the jeeva and the Ishwara also go together. Because of their reputation of being inseparable, they are called ‘sakhaa’. If you know one, you will automatically remember the other.

So, you have an anonymous friend who you do not know about. When the jeeva separated, he saw that there is a body, which is like a city. It has nine gates, and there is much scope for enjoyment. There are two openings for seeing the view outside, and for going out. There are two doorways for sounds to enter, two doorways for scents to enter, and one doorway for taste to enter through.

You see, the hands and feet are blind. The sense organs provide the information and the organs of action respond accordingly. The five praanas\* are a great shesha\* which abides when the body dies. The praanas do not die until the jeeva attains Moksha. These five praanas guard the city of the body. Naradji gave the analogy of a city, to describe the human body in detail. He first described the jeeva as a man called Puranjana, wherein Puranjana’s description was paroksha\*, and the description of the jeeva was aparoksha\*. Had he described the subtle straightaway, Prachinvarhi would have lost interest in the story.

Next he spoke of the intellect, as a woman called Pramada, who lived in the city of the physical body. The soul is bewitched by her, and gets so attached to her that it forgets the Lord. The intellect Pramada and the jeeva Puranjana fell deeply in love. When the intellect Pramada laughed, the jeeva Puranjana would also laugh. He considered her laughter, eating and movements, his own. He was totally infatuated with her. Ultimately, old age arrived in the

form of an enemy called Jara, with his host of diseases, and other troublesome enemies of the body. The pranas were badly defeated and left the body. Puranjana died thinking about Pramada, and as a result was born as a woman, becoming Pramada.

It is mentioned in the Bhagwat, that all the men in the world were women in their previous births, and all the women we see, were men in their past lives. Each died thinking about someone of the opposite sex. That is how the world is, so there is no point in considering anyone higher or lower than any other. Superiority has nothing to do with the sex of a person. It is not the name, religion, or sect which makes anyone superior or inferior, because the essence of everybody is the Paramatma.

So, when the jeeva Puranjana became a woman, he got married, had children and descendents. When the husband of this woman (who was Puranjana) died, she went with the body to the river bank, weeping bitterly. Just then, the anonymous friend, Agyat Sakha\* came and questioned her, saying, “My brother, who are you? You are not a woman, and nor is the dead man your husband. It is all the play of Maya. माया ह्येषा मया सृष्टा ‘*Maaya hye`shaa mayaa srishtaa*’ - it was I who organized this illusion. You had turned your back to Me, and gone towards the world, and got trapped in it. You are neither a woman nor a man. Both of us are swans – you and I, - अहं च त्वं च ‘*aham cha tvam cha.*’

You see, the intellect becomes so deluded that it considers the body to be ‘me’, dark or fair, tall or short, etc. It says, ‘I’ eat, when the sense organs eat, drink, or taste. It considers the mind’s tendencies (to be happy or sad) to be its own. The intellect has trained the Atma to identify so thoroughly with it that it gets agitated by trifles. The Atma, however, is nitya\*, shuddha\*, buddha\*, and mukta\*.”

Hearing this clarification, the veil of Maya was removed, and the jeeva felt united with its constant companion, the Paramatma,”

Prachinvarhi asked Naradji, “What justice is it, that good and bad deeds are done by one body, but the rewards and punishments are given to another, future body? The body that did the deeds gets no result, but the body who didn’t do the deeds is given the result. How fair is this?”

Naradji explained that it is not the body who is the doer – it is the subtle body who decides what to do, and orders the organs of action. The jeeva is bound to the body until it understands that its identification with the body is adhyas\*, a bhram\*, and that its real nature is advitiya\*, purna\*, and one with the Paramatma. The only way a person can rise above the delusion of being a body is to keep the company of Mahatmas.

तस्मिन्महन्मुखरिता मधुभिच्चरित्रपीयूषशेषसरितः परितः श्रवन्ति ।

ता ये पिबन्त्यवितृषो नृप गाढकर्णैस्तान्न स्पृशन्त्यशनतृड्भयशोकमोहाः ॥ ४.२९.४०

*Tasminmahanmukharitaa madhubhichcharitrapeeyushashe`shasaritah  
paritah sravanti,*

*Taa ye` pibantyavitrisho nripa gaadhakarnaistaanna  
sprishantyanatrbhayashokamohaah.*

4. 29. 40.

“King, when you sit among Mahatmas, you will see that rivers of elixir flow from their mouths, in the form of descriptions of the Lord. These great souls first experience the nectar of the nature of the Lord, and have no need to talk about it to any. However, the essence of the Lord is of such sweetness that it cannot be contained, and forces even the reticent Mahatmas into speaking about Him.

So, immerse your ears in the sweet rivers of the katha. Those who listen to this nectarine talk discover that their thirst continues to increase, no matter how much of this elixir they imbue through their ears.

What is the essence of a Mahatma? The essence of a Mahatma is the personification of the thirst for Shri Krishna. This thirst fills his heart, and is never quenched. The Mahatmas never tire of hearing talks about the Lord.

Those who get addicted to imbuing this elixir lose physical hunger and thirst. They do not fear the future, nor regret the past. Nor do they have any attachment for the present.

So, satsang is the only way to escape from the worldly bonds of ‘me’ and ‘mine’, which continue from generation to generation.”

Naradji’s sermon had the effect of detaching Prachinvarhi from every worldly consideration. He stopped undertaking yagyas, and went into isolation to do bhajan\*. His sons – the Prachetas – were already engaged in doing bhajan.

One day, the Lord Vishnu manifested, seated on the Garuda, before the Prachetas. They were overwhelmed to see Him, and eulogized at length. The Lord said, “Prachetas, you are all filled with brotherly love. Anyone who thinks about you ten brothers will be granted lasting brotherly love. Now, leave this place, get married, and increase the population of the world.

Prachetas, there is one thing more I wish to tell you. Daksha Prajapati, the son of Brahma, felt deeply ashamed to have been given a goat’s head. He gave up his life in shame. He will now be born as your son Daksha. Remember that he is a Brahmin of past birth. He will increase the population, so take care of him and look after your kingdom.”

When the Prachetas heard this sermon, they returned to their kingdom. They found no father, no organized rule, and no social arrangements of any kind. Priyavrata and Prachinvarhi had both been influenced by Naradji's talks, and had left, to worship the Lord in isolation. When Kings abandon their duty to protect and rule, and retreat to meditate, then the kingdom becomes like an ungoverned forest.

The Prachetas succumbed to anger. They had received a mantra from Shankarji, had a vision of the Lord Vishnu, and done years of tapasya. Their spiritual power was so powerful that their anger turned into fire and the trees began to burn. Chandrama\*, the devata of the trees, appeared. He is also the Devta of herbs and other plants – सोमोऽस्माकं ब्राह्मणानां राजा 'somasmaakam braahmanaanaam raajaa'. He provides them with liquid nourishment. So, Chandrama came to the Prachetas and said, "Look, my brothers, do not burn up the innocent trees. They all have life. Please don't destroy them. If you were to use them for a Yagya, for worship, or the good of the people, it was a different matter. Otherwise, they should not be destroyed. They have a daughter called Vaarshti. Please get married to her."

The Prachetas accepted Chandrama's suggestions and married Vaarshti. They had a son called Daksha. They became so engrossed in the affairs of the kingdom that they forgot Shankarji's mantra, and also forgot the Lord Vishnu. Naradji came when they became totally enwrapped in luxuries and indulgences. "Look," he said, "the entire creation comes from the Lord, and is seen by His power. It contains nothing worthy of attachment or aversion. Just as the sun causes rain and also makes the water evaporate, the entire creation emerges from the Lord and dissolves in Him. You should feel neither love, nor hatred for any, and not get trapped by worldly attachments. A birth, or a task, is worthwhile only when it is in the service of the Lord, or for pleasing Him. Knowledge is worthwhile only when it serves to free us from worldly attachments."

तत्कर्म हरितोषम् यत् सा विद्या या विमुक्तये।

*Tatkarma haritosham yat saa vidyaa yaa vimuktaye`.*

Naradji's teachings removed all the worldly attachments of the Prachetas. They began to see the Lord everywhere. As is glimpsed repeatedly in the Bhagwat, the association of Naradji achieved what the vision of Shankarji and Bhagwan Vishnu could not.

Now, the fourth Skandha ends here. As mentioned earlier, it contains thirty one chapters. Seven describe Dharma, because Dharma contains seven strands. Five contain Artha, because the Lord is experienced through the five

sense organs. Eleven chapters describe Kama, because eleven organs (five sense organs, five organs of action, and the mind) are used to fulfill desires. Of the last eight chapters, four speak about the Nirguna tattva\* and four about the Saguna tattva\*. King Prachinvarhi developed devotion of the Lord by the knowledge of the Nirguna tattva, and the Prachetas attained liberation by the knowledge of the Saguna tattva.

Now tomorrow you will hear about the characters of Rishabhdeva and Bharata. Some geography and astronomy will also be described.

Om, Shantih! Shantih! Shantih!



## **BHAGAWATAMRIT**

### **Pravarchan V.**

#### **(Skandha V & VI)**

The Shrimad Bhagwat Mahapurana adopts nine methods to make us understand the essence of the Lord. Where do all the different kind of beings and natural objects we see, come from, and where do they disappear? How are the Sun, Moon, stars and planets always kept in their places in the sky? What prevents them from clashing? Who is it, who gives succor, with grace and compassion, when our world is threatened? What is the factor which creates the variety of desires in different people, and what causes desires to change? How does the world progress with Time? What are the Lord's devotees like? How is the mind controlled? How is liberation attained? These nine topics are given as the method of learning, and knowing that it is the Lord who supports everything.

Now, you enter the fifth Skandha. It describes the sthiti (condition or state), which also establishes the Paramatma. If you seek to find the Paramatma by means of sense organs or mantras, you will only obtain inanimate matter. If you seek Him using the intellect, you will find the essence of nihilism. If you use the method of shraddha, you will obtain Ishwara. The method of direct experience will establish the supreme, all-pervading, non-dual Atman. So, the Paramatma is attained in the manner suited to the kind of search undertaken.

Listen to this once more: investigation through organs and instruments can only reveal inanimate matter. The dry intellect establishes a total void. Shraddha establishes Ishwara, and the seeker who uses the direct experience of his Atma, will find the irrefutable, non-dual Atman, the Brahman.

Now, reflect upon the lives of human beings. There are two types of indriyas\* in our body. One type is called the karmendriyas\*, like the hands and feet. These indriyas are blind. The other kind are called gnanendriyas\* - like the eyes, nose, tongue and ears. Thus, the human body is a mixture of sense and work organs. There is action as well as knowledge in people's lives. So, some sadhanas\* are karma pradhan\* and some sadhanas are gnan pradhan. Some are a mixture of both, some involve retreating from both, and some are to establish our Self as only an aloof witness. So, sadhanas are

graded in this way. A system is involved, which is known to enlightened people.

The reason the fifth Skandha describes the sthiti, is that the essence of the Lord is everywhere, and everywhere there is only the essence of the Lord. No place exists, which is vacant of this essence. There are three kinds of sthitis. One is to establish our self in the Self. Another is to establish our self in a particular place, and the third is to establish our self in a particular period in Time. All three conditions require an effort for spiritual progress. Some achieve it by the Grace of God, some thorough devotional worship, and some through yoga\*, and others achieve it through gnan.

All these methods for spiritual progress are described in the fifth Skandha. It tells us how religious rituals can serve to obliterate the misdeeds of a past life. It explains how yoga can control the restlessness of the mind and the physical urges, how devoted worship can help us to overcome every kind of craving, and how surrender to the Lord can free us from the pride of great wealth and power. It also elaborates on how tattvagnan dispels the darkness of Avidya\*.

The fifth Skandha reveals also how a person gets mentally and emotionally affected by what he hears, and fully convinced about the superiority of something, and inferiority of something else. These are the factors which strengthen worldly bonds. It is impossible to rid ourselves of these false impressions without the association of Saints, or a Sadguru\*, who explains the Knowledge (which is not derived from any human), and who establishes beyond any doubt, that the world is adhyarop\*. If anyone thinks that they can reach this realization through their own effort, and deep desire, they are sadly mistaken.

Priyavrat, the son of Swayambhuva Manu and Shatroopa, loved to associate with Saints, even as a child. He was quite young when he went off with Naradji, to worship the Lord at Naradji's ashram. His father, Swayambhuva Manu and grandfather Brahmaji, went to him and tried to explain that the Lord is not obtained by simply living in a forest, hut, or ashrama. A pure hearted person can obtain the Lord even as a householder, ruler, or Emperor. Priyavrata felt that Swayambhuva Manu may be saying all this out of fatherly affection and attachment. However, when Brahmaji reiterated what Manuji had said, he was convinced. He knew that Brahmaji's four mouths spoke the four Vedas. The Vedas have not been given by any human being, nor by the Ishwara. The Vedas are Knowledge itself, and self manifested. The jeevas and the Ishwara are seen in the light of the Vedas. Priyavrata was convinced of the authenticity of Brahmaji's words, and accepted their request to return.

After taking leave of Naradji, Priyavrata returned to his home. By God's grace, he had a long life and much power. He even tried to turn night into day, by using the wheels of his chariot to check the rays of the Sun. "The Lord had blessed us by making the divisions of night and day. Can't night be eliminated by His grace?" he reasoned.

Now, apart from the Lord Shri Krishna, the primary teacher of nishkaam karma\* is the Sun. If you wish to see the greatest nishkaam karma yogi\*, you can see the Sun. He does not rest for even one moment. He spreads light to all, gets attached to none, and continues to work without any expectation from anybody. He does not use words to teach people what karma yoga\* is; he teaches us through his actions. He is a true disciple of the Lord Shri Krishna. The Lord has said, in the Gita,

इमं विवस्वते योगं प्रोक्तवानहमव्ययम्।

*Imam vivasvate`yogam proktavaanahamavyayam.*

The mantra of the Rig Veda, स्वास्ति पंथामनुचरेम सूर्याचन्द्रमसाविव 'svasti panthaamanuchare`ma sooryaachnadramasaaviva' - means that the Sun always moves ahead on his path, is steadfast on his pattern of right behavior, and provides benefits to all.

Priyavrata tried to follow the path of the Sun. The pressure of his chariot's wheels upon the earth caused precious gems to emerge. The ocean was filled with seven kinds of flavors, and given its boundaries. Priyavrata divided the earth, and ruled over it for a long period of time.

Later, the innate detachment in Priyavrata surfaced. He left everything and returned to Naradji's ashram. He spent his last days there, worshipping the Lord who abides in all hearts, singing devotional songs, meditating, and thinking constantly about the Lord. Priyavrata has no parallel in history when it comes to a life of power, achievement, karma, gnan and total detachment.

Priyavrata had a son called Agnighra. Brahmaji sent an apasara\* from his own land, to entertain him. Agnighra was bewitched as soon as he saw her. He fell deeply in love with her and had many children by her. One of them was Nabhi\*.

Agnighra, being attached to the apsaraa, had to spend some time in the land of apsaraas, before he attained liberation. He was liberated only when he finally became totally detached.

Agnighra's son, Nabhi, was the personification of Dharma. Priyavrata's life had been full of both Dharma and power. His son, Agnighra inherited the

power, and his grandson, Nabhi, inherited the Dharma. All of them received the grace of the Lord and were blessed by Him.

It is not as though the Lord graces only those who have great qualities. We tend to consider ourselves superior, and many other inferior, but such an attitude is nothing but our vanity, and is totally unjustified. As far as intelligence is concerned, even animals and birds have intelligence. Everybody has intelligence, and every creature believes in what they consider to be right.

Nabhi had faith in Dharma. He asked the Brahmins to undertake a grand Yagya. Since the Yagya was carried out with perfect adherence to the Vedas, the Lord Himself manifested at its conclusion. Nabhi praised the Lord, saying, “Lord, You have granted me the greatest blessing by coming. A person is blessed even by remembering You when he sneezes, or slips and falls.”

The Brahmins praised the Lord, and said, “Lord, You always uphold the words of Brahmins. You respect the Brahmins who know the Vedas, live righteous lives, do Yagyas, and use their lives and activities for serving You. Your coming today, is because of these reasons. It is our desire that the wish of our King, Nabhi, be fulfilled, and he gets a son like You.”

The Lord said, “Brahmins, words spoken by righteous and learned Brahmins like you always come true. I, Myself, will come as the son of your King.”

Just see the generosity of our Lord! He fulfills every desire, whether it is for power and luxury, for a good son, or for wealth; and as for Moksha – that is the nature of the Lord! So, He kept His pledge, and manifested as Nabhi’s son, who was named Rishabhdeva. Rishabhdeva was the personification of a liberated soul. One, whose beauty shines in the form of Knowledge, is called ‘Rishabh’ – ऋषेण ज्ञानेन भाति इति ऋषभः ‘*rishe`na gnane`na bhaati iti rishabha`*’.

Nabhi went off to do bhajan when the Lord came as his son. They say that Indra\* stopped rain, when Rishabhdeva was a child. He wanted to know whether it indeed was the Lord who had manifested as Rishabhdeva. The Lord is He, who – कर्तुं अकर्तुं अन्यथाकर्तुं समर्थ ‘*kartum akartum anyathaakartum samartha`*’ - one who has the power to do, to not do, or change anything, without its affecting His greatness in any way.

There is a folk tale about this episode, which says that Indra wanted his daughter, Jayanti, to get married to Rishabhdeva. He wanted to make sure of the qualities of the groom, incase he chose an unworthy man. So, he wanted to test Rishabhdeva before placing the proposal.

We often hear the phrase – अष्टवर्षा भवेद् गौरी नववर्षा च रोहिणी ‘*ashtaa varshaa bhave`d gauri navavarshaa cha rohinee`*’ - but we also need to remember

what is written in the Manusmriti\*. It is written there, that it is better that a girl remains in her father's house, even after becoming a mature woman, rather than that she is made to marry a man lacking in good qualities.

So, Indra's thinking, regarding his daughter's future was absolutely appropriate. According to the Dharma shastras\*, a daughter should be married only after the bridegroom's qualities have been well tested. Since Rishabhdeva was the Lord Himself, He knew what was in Indra's mind, and created rain effortlessly, merely through desiring it.

Indra was impressed and overjoyed. He got his daughter married to Rishabhdeva. Many great kings were born in their lineage, and also, many highly qualified Brahmins. On the one side, the Navayogeshwaras were born, and King Bharata was born on the other side. Bharata ruled the seven continents of the earth. The significance of these details is that Rishabhdeva's sons had the capacity for excellent administration, adhered to religious attitudes, managed the economy, and remained emotionally unattached to the world. The Lord had many sons, all with great characters.

Rishabhdeva had grown up in the laps of learned people, and educated by those well versed in the Vedas. He did not restrict his son's education to learned tutors, but taught them himself. He did not educate them privately; his lessons were held in public. He arranged for his people to receive the same kind of education as his sons, because he had equal affection for both. The fact is, that there is no difference, because in the Sanskrit language, the putra\* is called the prajaa\* and the prajaa, the putra. So, Rishabhdeva considered his people his sons. He gave his hundred sons the same sermon as his people –

नायं देहो देहभाजां नृलोके कष्टान् कामानर्हते विड्भुजां ये ।

तपो दिव्यं पुत्रका येन सत्त्वं शुद्धयेद्यस्माद् ब्रह्मसौख्यं त्वनन्तम् ॥ ५.५.१

*Naayam de'ho de'habhaajaam nriloke` kashtaan kaamaanarhate` vidbhujam ye`*,

*Tapo divyam putrakaa ye`na sattvam shuddhye`dyasmaad brahmasaukhyam tvanantam.*

5.5.1.

“My dear little children listen attentively to what I say. This body is not given to us to waste in fulfilling petty desires. Physical pleasures are obtained even by the worms in the faeces, and they are quite happy to be where they are. If – despite having received a human birth, in this land of Bharatvarsha\* - you have only the same petty pleasures, then what have you actually achieved? Your Motherland is not a bhog bhoomi\*; it is a Dharma

bhoomi\*. Here, we must control our sense organs and indulge within the limits of what is ethical. A person who lacks maryada\* and self control, is not worthy of being called a human.”

प्रीतिर्न यावन्मयि वासुदेवे न मुच्यते देहयोगेन तावत् । ५.५.६

*Preetirna yaavanmayi vaasude`ve`na muchyate`de`hayoge`na taavat. 5.5.6*

In his sermon, Rishabhdeva told everybody that unless and until a love for the Lord, who abides in the hearts of all, is developed, nobody can become free of the attachment with the body, and nor can one obtain liberation. A true Guru, Father, or Mother, is the one who frees us from the noose of death, and teaches us how to cultivate a deep love for the feet of the Lord Vasudeva\*.

The word Vasudeva is split into two parts: Vasu + deva. वसति इति वासु: ‘*Vasati iti vaasuh*’ – the one who lives in the hearts of all creatures is called vasu; and दीव्यति प्रकाशते इति देव: “*deevyati prakaashate`iti de`vah*’ - the one who remains unchanged in all the sad\*- chid\* akritees\*, vikritis\*, prakritiyon\*, and sanskritiyon\*, is called ‘deva’. When the meaning of both is combined, the person having all these qualities is called Vasudeva.

After the Lord Rishabhdeva had given advice and instructions to all, he divided their responsibilities for work and worship. He crowned his eldest son, Bharata, and accepted the status of a wandering monk, in order to show what kind of a life a monk should lead, and to encourage people towards asceticism.

The life of an avadhoota\* has no room for any type of narrow, social rigidity or restrictions. Rishabhdeva freed himself of all orthodox stipulations, and displayed a magnanimous, holistic attitude.

It is said that eight siddhis\* came into Rishabhdeva’s life. These included the ability to go anywhere at will, fly in the sky, obtain any desired object, etc. Rishabhdeva rejected them all.

Raja Parikshit now asked whether it would have harmed Rishabhdeva in any way, had he accepted the siddhis. Shukadevji replied:

न कुर्यात्कर्हिचित्सख्यं मनसि ह्यनवस्थिते ।

यद्विश्रम्भाच्चिराच्चीर्णं चस्कन्द तप ऐश्वरम् ॥ ५.६.३.

*Na kuryaatkarhichitsakhyam manasi hyanavasthite`,*

*Yadvishrambhaachchiraachcheerna chaskanda tapa e`shvaram.*

5.6.3.

“King, the mind is very fickle – one should never consider it to be a true friend. The Lord Shankar was confident of his mind, and so were many yogis. As a result, their hard earned tapa\* was destroyed. People who claim to have overcome desire, anger and greed, are deluded. Just as we can never trust a cheat, in the same way we should never trust what the mind tells us, because the mind is as untrustworthy as a cheat.

Rishabhdeva lead such a life that no one needed to do even his last rites. A person whose body is burnt by gnagani\* is no longer suited for routine last rites. The forest in which Rishabhdeva used to wander, caught fire and began to burn, but Rishabhdeva did not leave it. He placed a stone in his mouth, as though there was nothing further for him to say or do, eat or drink, pray or meditate. This liberated man was thus liberated in every sense of the word.

When Bharata ascended to the throne, an atmosphere of piety spread over the entire kingdom. The country – called ‘Ajanaabha’ all this time – was given the name of ‘Bharatvarsha’, since Bharata became King. The son of Shakuntala and Dusyanta, with the same name, came much later. Our country is not named after the later Bharata – it is named after the son of Rishabhdeva, who lived much before the other Bharata was born.

Peace reigned in the land for as long as Bharata ruled. There was no fear of thieves, or any other kind of danger. The people were free of all major problems. They lived in peace and security, and King Bharata undertook Yagya after Yagya.

A question arises, regarding the fruits of the fire ritual. Logically, the fruit of the Yagya should be given to the person who undertakes it, and pours oblations into the fire. However, the fruit of the Yagya is given to Indra, and not to the yajamaan\* who does the havan\*. Why is that?

The explanation given in the Shrimad Bhagwat is that the jeeva has acquired a false vanity, thinking that it is he who is making the offering in the Yagya. The fact is that a person can offer oblations only when inspired by the Lord to do so, and only then can Indra receive the oblation. There is no body who is doing the ritual, and no Indra who enjoys the results. It is the one Lord, seated in the hearts of both, who prompts one to raise his hand and pour rarified butter into the fire, and prompts the other to receive it. The giver and the taker, the donor and the receiver, are not two – it is only the Paramatma seen as both.

King Bharata understood this subtle truth, so all his Yagyas were undertaken with a feeling of equanimity and divinity. His Yagyas are described thus, in the Bhagwat.

Bharata ultimately handed over the Crown to his son, and went into the forest. He settled on the banks of the Gandaki River, taking routine baths in it, and passing his days in rituals of worship and meditation.

Now we see the quirks of fate. Bharata grew deeply attached to a baby deer. He saw that its mother died after giving birth, and feared that the little deer would fall into the river and drown. His heart was filled with a pure compassion. He kept the deer with him and brought it up lovingly.

The Gunas\* are such that they turn sattvaguna\* into rajoguna\* and the rajoguna into tamoguna\* very fast. If you bring a leper into your house, feed him and arrange for his treatment, it is a sattvic\* act. If, however, this kindness results in the development of vanity – that you are so noble – than, it makes you fall prey to attachment and aversion, love and disdain, and will lead to your downfall.

Bharata grew proud that he had saved and brought up the little deer. The sattvic compassion turned into a rajasic\* conceit. Bharata tied himself to the deer with bonds of attachment. He meant to merely show compassion, but became completely preoccupied with the deer.

One day, the deer ran off to join his own herd. No two creatures can always be of the same mind. Two minds meet for a while, and then go their own way. People walk together for a while, meet at a well, but the innate differences in their natures, upbringing, and circumstances ensure an inevitable change of priorities.

Bharata was very unhappy when the deer left him. He missed the deer terribly, and the deer occupied his mind even when his spirit left his body. As per – अन्ते मतिः सा गतिः ‘ante` matih saa gatih\*’ – Bharata became a deer in his next life. This episode teaches us to keep our hearts pure, and never get attached to anything in this world.

Worship of the Lord, however, is never wasted, and nor was the life of King Bharata a total waste. His successive births as a deer and then as Jada Bharata\* were not wasted either. In fact, it could be said that two important truths were revealed through these three births. The first truth is that a person should never become attached to anything worldly. The second truth is that a person who worships the Lord may slip and fall, may have to be born as an animal or bird, but his devotion for the Lord will be retained, regardless of the body he acquires. Love for the Lord has its own obvious effect. King Bharata had love for the Lord and he retained this even as a deer.

When he died as a deer, King Bharata was born as Jada Bharata, the son of a Brahmin. He was ill-treated by his step mother and step brothers. His father



tried to educate him, and organized his thread ceremony, but Jada Bharata failed to learn the Gayatri Mantra by heart even after years of practice!

Jada Bharata began to lead a life which was in keeping with his name and qualities. He could not accomplish even the simplest of tasks given to him. He did not seem to notice when the ground was uneven, or whose animals grazed in whose fields. He was content with whatever he got, at times filling his stomach with even rotten food, and sleeping in the open fields. Established in his Self, Jada Bharata was untroubled by external factors. This was surely the result of the tattvagnan and worship of his past life.

One day, some dacoits caught hold of Jada Bharata. The animal they had planned to sacrifice to the Goddess Kali, had somehow got loose and ran off. The dacoits decided to sacrifice Jada Bharata instead. They gave him the ritual bath, and fed him well. They garlanded him and put sandal paste, in preparation of the sacrifice. When they took Jada Bharata to the Goddess Kali, She saw that they had proposed to kill a Mahatma who had tattvagnan\* and sammatva\*. How could She allow such a great person to be sacrificed to Her? She snatched the sword from the dacoit, and cut off all their heads. Then She began juggling the severed heads in a rage.

The Shrimad Bhagwat implies that this is the fate of whoever misbehaves with a Mahatma. The Ramcharitmanas says the same. The statements of both are given below:

एवमेव खलु महदभिचारातिक्रमः कात्स्न्येनात्मने फलति । ५.९.१९

साधु अवज्ञा कर फल ऐसा । जरै नगर अनाथ कर जैसा ।।

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जो अपराध भगतकर करई । राम रोष पावक सो जरई ।।

रामचरितमानस

*E`vame`va khalu mahadabhichaaraatikramah kaatsnye`naatmane falati.*

5.9.19.

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*Saadhu avagyaa kara fala aisaa,*

*Jare`nagar anaatha kara jaisaa*

*Ramcharitmanas.*

And

*Jo aparaadha bhagatakara karaeei,*

*Raama rosha paavaka so jarayee.*  
*Ramchiritmanas.*

Jada Bharata had achieved such a lofty state that he felt no anger for the dacoits. He was not elated when they honored him and fed him, and he felt no fear when they were about to kill him. He was equally indifferent to respect and insult, life and death, or whatever came to him. He knew that an earthen pot is made and broken, but the essence of the earth remains unchanged. It makes no difference to the Atma, whether the body is dead or alive. Nothing disturbed Jada Bharata's equanimity.

Now, the episode of the King of Sindhu Saubhari, called Rahugana, enters the story. The Puranas\* narrate this story by saying that the deer which had been saved by King Bharata, was fated to have hundreds of births. As a result of satsang, however, he was absolved of the rest of his births and had to be born only once, as King Rahugana.

King Rahugana was very fond of satsang, because the impressions of previous lives always leave their influences. There is an important text, called the 'Charak', which is a part of the Ayurveda\*. It gives details about how a baby in the womb is affected by good and bad tendencies. The tendencies of the parents, and both the parents of the parents, affect the unborn baby. He is also affected by the impressions of his own past lives, and the food taken by his mother.

The influence of King Rahugana's past life was so strong that he did not enjoy any company other than that of the Mahatmas. Indeed, who else can bestow the kind of pure love which the Mahatmas give? Who is there, in this world, who can truthfully tell another his every secret? Worldly interaction requires a certain amount of deceit. There is nobody one can fully bare one's heart to. No matter how close any two persons may be, there has to be some reservation, at some stage in their relationship and interaction. So, those who dislike any kind of artificiality always prefer to associate with satpurush\*, and obtain satsang.

King Rahugana was going to obtain the satsang of Kapildevji. One of the kahaars\* was suddenly taken ill. The others set out in search of a replacement, and met Jada Bharata. Being a hefty and carefree man, he went along, and was told to hold one of the four poles of the palanquin. Since Jada Bharata had never done this work before, he could not walk in rhythm with the others, and kept walking out of step.

King Rahugana was jolted repeatedly, and kept scolding the palanquin bearers. Ultimately, the others told him that it was because Jada Bharata's uneven gait that the palanquin did not move smoothly.

King Rahugana taunted Jada Bharata angrily, asking whether he was too hungry to walk properly. “Your body is quite hefty – why can’t you walk properly? I will have to teach you a lesson if you don’t stop jolting me”, he warned.

Jada Bharata began to smile when he heard these words. He said, “You see, King, this body is a clod of earth, created from the five elements. No learned person mistakes it for the Atma. This body did not exist in the past; it will not exist in the future, and it is mine at present. If the palanquin rested on my shoulder, then I would be a suitable candidate for you to teach a lesson to. So, what are you trying to teach me?”

King Rahugana jumped down from the palanquin as soon as he heard Jada Bharata’s words. He fell at his feet and asked Jada Bharata, “Sir, who are you? You speak like one who knows all the Vedas and the shastras. Your words are so true – the Atma is separate from the body, and this body cannot be called the Atma. Who are you, who speak such profound truths?

Look, I fear nothing; not the thunderbolt of Indra, nor the trishul\* of Shankara, and not even the scepter of Yama\*. My only fear is that I may misbehave with a Mahatma.”

The King Rahugana asked, with even greater humility, “Sir, how do you say that there is no weight on you? I concede that you are not the body, but if a vessel is placed on a fire, it gets heated, and after it is heated, the water inside the vessel is heated, and only after that does the rice inside get cooked. So, when the Atma is seated in your body, how can it not experience the weight which falls on the body? It is natural to feel the weight. Then, how is it that you do not experience the weight of the palanquin?”

The Mahatma Jada Bharata replied, “You see, King, this is the earth. It seems as though a man is walking on it, but the foot of the man who walks on the clay, is also made of clay. The knees are above the feet, the waist is above the knees, and the shoulders are above the waist. A palanquin is placed on the shoulder, and a man is seated in the palanquin. All of this is clay. The one who is all dressed up and says, ‘I am the King, the ruler’, is also clay. Clay, in the form of the palanquin, clay in the form of the bearers, and clay in the form of the one seated on top. When all this is a variation of clay, why do you call yourself a King. It is possible that tomorrow you may be defeated by me, and I win over you. Then I will be in the palanquin, and you will carry the palanquin on your shoulder. What is this worldly farce about who is the King, and who are the subjects, and who is a load to whom? Despite all this, King, I am prepared to do what you say.”

After this, an excellent discussion ensued. Jada Bharata clarified to King Rahugana, that the world can not be created out of particles, because

particles are shapeless and coincidental. One cannot experience particles. अविद्यया मनसा कल्पितास्ते ‘*Avidyayaa manasaa kalpitaaste*’. Ignorance compels us to first imagine independent particles, then groups of particles, in order to understand the essence of this creation. The world cannot be created by Prakriti\*, because Prakriti can not have the qualities of being consequential, and transient, as well as eternal. So, the pure knowledge about the nature of the Brahman is the real tattva\*, and nothing else is worth bothering about. Things change as soon as we define them. When we begin to define the changed forms, they change yet again. They lack sustainability; they have no permanent state. So, dismiss them as mithyaa\*.

The word mithyaa is used here, to indicate that a mental or verbal definition of the world is not possible. The feeling that it is real – or unreal – is experienced by the witness which is its adhishtaan\*, and it is poorna\*. The God who supports this world of name and form is complete. The witness who illumines it is the chetan\*. If it were not one with the chinmatra satta\*, it would have been transient; and if the reality was not one with the awareness, it would be inanimate. So, to establish non-duality, it is essential to accept that the adhishtaan and the self-illuminating awareness are one and the same.

This entire episode is given in order to explain the cause of this sthiti. Sthiti comes not only by the Grace of God, but by the Grace of the Sadguru as well. It can come because of good deeds like Yagyas, or by worship, or by knowledge. All these sthitis are created by the Lord. Later on came many great Kings like Gaya, who are described in the Bhagwat.

Now, the Shrimad Bhagwat’s fifth chapter sees King Parikshit questioning Shri Shukadevji Maharaj about the geographical conditions. It is made absolutely clear that all the descriptions given, of the islands, countries and continents, are not for the purpose of geographical or historical research. They are given to facilitate the ability to see God everywhere, and in all forms. All these descriptions establish that everything – from the inanimate and animate, from a wisp of grass right up to Prakriti, and from an earth worm to the Hiranyagarbha\* – is nothing but the form of the Lord. Meditating upon the descriptions of the Lord removes the last vestige of attachments and aversions.

All the apparent differences around us – the difference between man and woman, between religious sects, between Indian and non-Indian, between the Vedic\* and other philosophies, between the Shaivas\* and the Shaktas\*, etc. etc., - are not real differences. They are hammers which shatter our hearts. Mental fragmentation cuts into our heart. So, the geographical and

astronomical descriptions have the specific purpose of mending our heart and making it whole again.

Notwithstanding all this, I describe a little, in the form of a sample. As per the Shrimad Bhagwat, the Earth has seven continents, each double the size of the previous one. It is the same with the oceans which surround them.

Considered impartially, the Bharatvarsha is not just the area between Kanya Kumari and the Himalayas. What is the meaning of the area called the Jambudveep? This word comes from the root 'jamb', which means that Jambudveep is a place where the people born in it, are un-perverted and obtain great good fortune. A grammatical analysis indicates that any person born here, is spiritually successful. Jambudveep is surrounded by a salty sea. It contains many States and islands. As per the description, all the surface land on Earth, is called Bharatvarsha, and is a karma kshetra\*. Every human born on this Earth should work. Within the Bharatvarsha, the area from Kanya Kumari to the Himalayas, is called the Bharat Khanda, as is said when one takes a sankalpa\*:

जम्बूद्वीपे भारतवर्षे भरतखण्डे

*'Jambu dveepe` bhaarat varshe` bhaarat khande`'.*

So, all the land in the world comes within the Jambudveep. In the lands beyond the Bharatvarsha or Bharat Khanda, people have long lives of great indulgence. They have great developments and luxury. However, even the Devtas long to be born in our Bharat Khanda, because the very earth here is holy. All the impurities of the land were washed away into the salty sea, and the land is now ideally suited for bhajan.

It is in this land that the Ganga descended from the feet of the Lord. In the nine lands of Jambudveep, the sakaar\* Lord is worshipped – as Matsya\*, Kachap\*, Narasimha\* and as Nara-Narayana\* only in the area called Bharatavarsha. This is its specialty, because only here is the Lord worshipped as having a form. In other parts of the world, the Lord is worshipped in the form of the elements, as the Goddess Earth, as the Lord of the Seas, Wind, or Sky. Nowhere else do people worship an image of the Lord with form.

Astronomy is described next. The purpose of this description is also to impress upon us, the grandeur of the Paramatma who controls all the wonderful planets, and stars, and suns, and moons, in the universe. Our mind gets purified as we ponder upon these factors.

The Lord Shesha\* is described next. Parikshit placed another question, after hearing the description of the Shesha. "What is naraka?" he asked. "Is it a

land away from the earth, or is it a land on this earth/” It is worth paying attention to the reply given by Shri Shukadevji Maharaj. He did not define naraka or swarga\* as being specific lands. He said only that naraka and swarga are obtained according to our actions. A person who has done good deeds experiences the joys of swarga, and the person who has sinned, experiences the suffering of hell. Naraka and swarga are created with the specific purpose of giving the results of the actions of people. Both are direct results of the individual’s actions. They cannot be called ‘de`shaanter’\* - they should be considered ‘falaanter’\*. An experience of naraka is inevitable for anyone who indulges in ‘paapa’\*, so one must always strive to avoid doing anything bad.

A number of factors are involved here. One is that the body is not the Atma. There is a jeeva which goes to different lands, according to his actions and desires. It is also born in different bodies. Different lands can also mean different sights or different points of view. Our actions bring us remorse, peace, or bliss. They are the fruits of Dharma, but the result of bad karma is also unavoidable.

Many terrible hells are described, where sinners are torn apart, pecked by birds of prey, and thrown into cauldrons of boiling oil. These narratives are given so that people reflect upon the consequences of their actions.

“In that case, everybody will have to go to hell, to suffer for their misdeeds,” commented Parikshit. “Please tell us how we may save ourselves.”

The sixth Skandha starts with the answer to this question. It contains twenty nine chapters. Three describe the names of the Lord, fourteen describe the beauty and worship, and two give details about ritual worship. It describes how the Grace of God lifts up the worst sinners. That is why the methodology of the Shrimad Bhagwat calls the sixth Skandha the ‘Pushti’\* - पोषणं तदनुग्रहम् ‘poshanam tadanugraham’. When a tree is planted in a garden, it is periodically watered, given fertilizers, and pruned. The gardener does whatever is needed, to make the tree healthy and beautiful. The world is like a garden, and although people see the Lord’s garden, they fail to see the gardener who created it –

आराममस्य पश्यन्ति तत्र पश्यति कश्चन।

*Aaraamamasya pashyatnti tanna pashyati kashchana.*

What is the world? An everlasting poem, eternally youthful.

पश्य देवस्य काव्यं न ममार न जीर्यति।

*Pashya de`vashya kaavyam na mamaara na jeeryati.*

Whenever feelings begin to dry up, the Lord nourishes us with a shower of Grace. A jeeva dries up when people do things which cause pain to others, and belittle themselves. The Lord never causes anybody's downfall. It is we who create our own regrets and shame. When the jeeva reaches a state from which he is unable to rise, then the Lord goes there, like a good gardener, and lifts him up with Grace.

There is nobody on earth who does not commit some sin or wrong action. Nobody can be totally free of such mistakes. Those who claim that they have never done anything wrong are either childishly simple, or they wish to deceive others, because we all err at some point.

The question is, how do we atone for our mistakes? The answer is that small mistakes need small prayaschits\*, and the more serious sins require bigger forms of atonement. A fresh wound is raw, but an old wound is dry and hard. Some wounds are surface scratches, and some are deep gashes. We must understand the seriousness before we decide upon the remedy. None of us can be aware of all the wrongs done by us. Apart from the Lord, no one even knows the proper definition of 'paapa' and 'punya'. The Lord is the only one who knows every good and bad act done by every person since time immemorial, and also what should be given as the consequence.

We often regret things we do, but continue to repeat them. The atonement then becomes as futile as an elephant's bath. Elephants use their trunks to pick up sand, and spray it all over themselves, as soon as they have finished bathing.

The syllable 'praya' (in prayashchit) indicates paapa, and 'chit' indicates cleansing. But, how do we cleanse a sin? Should we do tapasya\*, chadrayana vrat\*, Ganga snaan\*, or japa\*? It is a fact that all these will help to cleanse the body and absolve us of a particular sin, but it will not cleanse the heart from where the sin emerged originally. The source of the desire which caused us to sin, will not be purified – नाधर्मजं तद् हृदयं '*naadharmajam tad hridayam*'. As soon as any of the temptations appear, which lead us towards lust, anger or greed, they will overcome our minds. Kama\*, krodha\* and lobha\* are in our hearts, and are gateways to hell.

त्रिविधं नरकस्येदं द्वारं नाशनमात्मनः ।

*Trividham narakasye`dam dvaaram naashanamaatmanhah.*

No external factor can succeed in cleansing the heart. So, seek the means within yourself. The one who is seated within, is the purest of the pure. So bring Him, who is already there, into your conscious awareness, and start to

serve all, with the feeling of serving Him. This will definitely purify your heart.

The Lord is the one who uplifts the fallen, purifies the impure, and raises the lowly. He also liberates those who are headed for hell. This is the Godliness of God. The greatest purity is, therefore, that our lives be filled with Bhakti.

The episode of Ajamil\* is used to emphasize upon the effect of remembering, hearing, or singing the name of the Lord. Ajamil was a learned Brahmin, who lived an exemplary life. Unfortunately, he fell into bad company, picked up bad habits, and a prostitute into the house. He did all the patit\* karmas. Patit karmas are when the sense organs are allowed to indulge indiscriminately, and the person becomes depraved. Even at the age of eighty, Ajamil continued to lead a sinful life, habitually imprisoning people, and gambling, cheating, killing and abducting people.

It so happened that at the moment of his death, Ajamil called out to his youngest son, Narayana, to whom he was greatly attached. Every wicked person fears death, because he knows that his misdeeds will take him to hell. A paapi lacks atmabal\*. The memories of his misdeeds crowd him and he feels frightened. His mind becomes the possession of Yamaraj\*. He gets a glimpse of the Yamaraj's vehicle, the fearsome bull buffalo. He sees the dark Yamadutas\*, with fearsome beards and moustaches. Ajamil started to tremble with fear, when he saw these sights, and called out, "Narayana! Oh, Narayana – come to me."

Narayana is the name of the Lord, and His attendants appeared as soon as Ajamil uttered this name. They cut off the noose the Yamadutas had put round Ajamil's neck, and pushed them away. The Yamadutas asked, "Who are you? What do you think you are doing? We are the men of Yamaraj, and have come to take this paapi\* to the court, where Yamaraj will judge him."

Ajamil could see and hear the two groups discussing around him. The Yamadutas said, 'What did he do, except call out to his son?' The Lord's men replied, "We concede that he called out to his son, but, since when has his son had this name? His son is just ten years old, so he has had this name for the past decade. Our Master, however, has this name since Time began, so the name belongs to Him, not to Ajamil's son. Our Master has the right over Ajamil, not yours. As men of Yamaraj, please tell us the definition of papa and punya. Who goes to narak and who goes to swarga? Does every creature have to go to hell?"

Challenged thus, the Yamadutas began to give their definitions of Dharma. Their arguments were akin to those of the Smart\* group, based on the Dharma Shastras\*. They said that every body houses some witnesses, who keep watch on everything done by the individual. They expose the details



when the jeeva is taken to Yamaraj, and the jeeva receives appropriate punishment. The punishment is not given with any desire to inflict pain; it is given with the intention of cleansing the anatahkaran\*. Just as a vessel is scrubbed and rinsed thoroughly, the jeeva is sent to Yamaraj's hell, for purification. When he is cleansed, he is ready for the next birth and future lives.

The Lord's men told the Yamadutas that all they had said was in keeping with the Smart Dharma. "You do not know the Bhagavadiya\* Dharma. The Dharma of the Lord does not depend upon the jeeva – it works according to the Lord's Grace."

Even in this context, I give an example, which may not be palatable to some. However, tell me – what sadhana\* did Kubja do in her previous life? Did she belong to a higher cast, or was her work very holy, or were her aspirations very lofty? She was on her way to massage the wicked Kansa. She was physically deformed, and still the Lord accepted her. Did He accept her because of her sadhana? My dear, the one who comes to give Grace, cannot help but shower Grace!

So, as the form of the Lord contains Grace – and does not bother about who deserves it, showering Grace upon even the likes of Kubja and Putana – so also the name of the Lord is Grace incarnate. The same qualities, the same nature, and the very same Dharma which are in His form, are also in His name. Blessings are not handed out in keeping with the receiver's actions; they are showered in keeping with the nature of the bestower. This is the Dharma of the Bhagwat, and the Lord Himself undertakes this anushtaan\* for the benefit of all creatures. The Lord does not count the rotis\* he gives – He just showers so many that a person has no need to ask for any in future lives.

जेहि जाचत जाचकता जरी जाय जो जारति जोर जहानहि रे।

*Jehi jaachata jaachakataa jari jaaya jo jaarati jora jahaanahi re`.*

The Lord's men explained, "You see, Yamadutas, the Lord loves His own name dearly. Whenever this name is spoken, it is the power of the name which works, not the background of the person who speaks it. Ajamil took the Lord's name at the moment of his death – his intention may have been to call his son – but the fact that he took the Lord's name resulted in his atoning for millions of past mistakes. Had the Lord not chosen him and decided that Ajamil should take His name at that moment, then it would not have been possible for Ajamil to do so. One form of the lord is called 'mugdha'\*. He goes crazy when He hears anyone take His name, and

embraces that person without bothering to see what that person is like. This is one of the Lord's compassionate qualities. If the Lord only meted out justice, how would the Bhakti sampradaya\* continue to flourish? The devotees thrive on the Lord's partiality and Grace. He Graces even the fallen, helpless and depraved. The name of the Lord destroys all our sins, regardless of the reason for its utterance.

Well, let us accept that all sins are destroyed when the Lord's name is spoken. What comes next? Does one sin again, before one dies? If you say that you will sin again before you die, then all the sins which have been destroyed will spring to life again. Then how will any person be saved? It is not always possible that we are able to take the name of the Lord at the moment of death, since we often lose control of our thoughts and organs. So, what can one do?

The answer to this question is that the name of the Lord should be spoken till the last possible moment. If no sin is committed in between the time the name is spoken and the person dies, it is considered that he took the name at the time of death. Our scriptures say that if someone gives an order which is impossible to carry out, that order is not to be followed. So, how can anyone be told that they must take the name of the Lord when they lack the capacity to do so?"

The Yamadutas had no reply for all these points. They left Ajamil and went to Yamaloka\*. Ajamil's heart became so pure at the sight of the Lord's men that he wanted to prostrate before them and say something, but they vanished suddenly.

Having been saved thus, Ajamil gave up his bad habits. He left the house, left the prostitute, and all his worldly connections. He went to the banks of the Ganga and began to do bhajan. He worshipped the Lord for many years and, as a result, obtained Him. How auspicious the Lord's name is.

The Yamadutas went to Yamaraj and said, "Sir, you did not warn us about who we should go to, and who we should stay away from. Please tell us how many rulers do the good and bad people of the world have. If there are many rulers, they are bound to clash. If you are the only ruler, why were we humiliated at Ajamil's house? When we went to fetch Ajamil, some four armed men came. They wore garlands and golden robes. They were smiling gently and looked like people from some divine land. They snatched Ajamil from us, and brushed us aside roughly. Please tell us who they were."

Yamaraj understood what had happened. He said, 'Apart from me, the world has one Master who pervades the world the way thread pervades cloth. It is the Lord who has laid down the laws of Dharma. It is extremely difficult to understand the subtleties of the laws fully. I know them. So do

Swayambhuva Manu, Narada, Prahalad, Shukadev, Bali and a few more. Others do not understand the finer points.

प्रायेण वेद तदिदं न महाजनोऽयं  
देव्या विमोहितमतिर्बत माययालम्।  
त्रय्यां जडीकृतममतिमधु पुष्पितायां  
वैतानिके महति कर्मणि युज्यमानः॥ ६.३.२५

*Praaye`na ve`da tadidam na mahaajanoayam  
de`vyaa vimohitamatirbata maayayaalam,  
Trayyam jadeekritamatirmadhu pushpitaayaam  
Vaitaanike` mahati karmani yujyamaanaah.  
6.3.25.*

The Mayadevi\* of the Lord has created a vast expanse of activities which confuses people. This does not bring salvation. Only devotion to the Lord brings salvation.

The fact that Ajamil took the Lord's name at the moment of death proves that the Lord's stamp is on him, and his calling out to his son is secondary. The Lord is a lover of His name. He tells us of His many names, and chants them Himself. Every atom of nature vibrates with His name, so anyone taking His name matches the wavelength of the Lord. His spirit melts in the spirit of the Lord, and his feelings mingle with the Lord's feelings. Then, all his sins and suffering are destroyed.

You see, past papas result in taapa\*, and wrong actions undertaken in the present are papas. The name of the Lord activates a release from the action as well as the result of (bad) actions.

So, my men, be alert. Never go to a place where the Lord's name is remembered, spoken or sung. But definitely go to the person who never utters His name, whose thoughts never turn towards Him, and who has no love for the feet of the Lord.”

जिह्वा न वक्ति भगवद्गुणनामधेयं  
चेतश्च न स्मरति तच्चरणारविन्दम्।  
कृष्णाय नो नमति यच्छिर एकदापि  
तानानयध्वमसतोऽकृतविष्णुकृत्यान्॥ ६.३.२९

*Jihvaa na vakti bhagavadgunanamadhe`yam  
che`tashcha na smarati tacchranaaravindam,  
Krishnaaya no namati yachchira e`kadaapi  
Taanaanayadhvamasatoakrita-vishnukrityaan.  
6.3.29.*

The story of Ajamil is narrated to explain that Aja\* had mil\* with Avidya\*, and was deluded by worldly attractions. He obtained release when he uttered the name of the Lord. The purpose of the Name, is to free us from the bonds of Maya\* and Moha\*. A person who takes the name of the Lord chooses the right path, and the Grace of the Lord's name, the Grace of the King of names, brings him blessings and salvation.

So, the praises of the Lord's name in the first three chapters of the sixth Skandha are now complete. After this come the stories of Indra's succumbing to arrogance, Vritasura's death, Diti giving birth to the Marudganas, the story of Chitraketu, the blissful existence of Shankarji, and the story of Prahalad. All these you will hear tomorrow.

Om Shantih! Shantih! Shantih!

## BHAGWATAMRIT

### Pravarchan VI.

#### (Skandha VI & VII)

Yesterday we spoke of how Prachinvarhi was liberated through the nirguna nishthaa\*, and the Prachetas, through their saguna nishthaa\*. A brief account was given of how Brahma's son, Daksha ended his life because he could not bear the ignominy of having a goat's head, and how he was reborn as the son of the Prachetas. Thus, he was born into the warrior class of the Kshatriyas. The lineage of Daksha (the son of the Prachetas) should have followed, but the story was sidetracked by the question which cropped up, as to how a person can become free of sin. It would be a great injustice on the part of the Lord, if a person remained a sinner forever, and had no means to atone for even comparatively small mistakes. How appropriate is it that a person has to go either to heaven for ever, or to hell for eternity? There has to be someone, to uplift the poor and powerless, those who have fallen or are backward; someone who is neither cruel nor unfeeling, but so compassionate that the worst of sinners and sufferers can seek His protection and rise up again. The power of the Lord's name is emphasized to provide this reassurance. In the Rig Veda, it is said:

मर्ता वयं अमर्त्य स्थिते भूरि नाम मनामहे ।

*Martaa vayam amartya sthite` bhoori naama manaamahe`.*

The word मनामहे *manaamahe`* is analyzed to mean भजामहे *bhajaamahe`*, indicating, "Lord, we are surrounded by Death, and You are immortal. We take the shelter of Your name. We surrender to Your name."

It is mentioned in the Shrimad Bhagwat, that even highly educated people are often ignorant about the power the Lord's name contains. They have faith in elaborate Yagyas and other rituals, but lack faith in the simple name of the Lord. They do not know that this little name – so like a tiny brilliant diamond – contains all the Grace, which is the nature of the Lord. The name is just like the Lord. It brings great good fortune. That is why Goswami Tulsidas says –

रघुवर रावरि यहै बड़ाई ।

निदरि गनी आदर गरीब पर करत कृपा अधिकाई ।

*Raghuvara raavari yahai badaai,  
Nidari ganee aadara gareeba para karata kripaa adhikaayee.*

New, Shri Shukadevji Maharaj concludes the story of Ajamil, and begins to speak of the Daksha, the son of the Prachetas. Daksha used his spiritual powers to create much of the world.

There is not the slightest need to doubt that the world can be created by mental and spiritual powers. All of us possess such powers, and this is proved every time we see a dream. Does the dream not seem real, while it lasts? It is just an example of our mental powers. In the Upanishads, it is said that the waking state is an office, where we conduct our worldly business, and we are paid according to our work. The dream state is a test for our mental and spiritual powers. Our mind is most active, creating men and women, earth and sky, gods and goddesses – creating even the Lord, in our dreams! The Vedas have said – मनसा प्रजा असृजत् ‘*manasaa prajaa asritjat*’ - the people were created by the mind.

Although Daksha Prajapati created the world through his mental and spiritual powers, it would not endure. The world would remain for as long as he projected it, and vanish as soon as his will power shifted. Seeing this, Prajapati Daksha went to a place of pilgrimage called Aghmarshan, situated in the Vindhya Mountains. He undertook an intense tapasya, which pleased the Lord. The Lord appeared in His eight-armed form, seated on His Garuda. Daksha praised the Lord, saying, “Lord, what is, and what is not, is all You! The believers and the atheists quarrel with each other verbally and physically. However, those who know You, know that it is You alone who illumines both the believers and the disbelievers. Those who say ‘asti’\* get their food from You, and those who say naasti’\* also get their food from You. You are one. Please fulfill my desire.”

After Daksha’s prolonged prayer, the Lord told him to give up the effort of mental creation, and to begin physical procreation – मिथुनव्यवायधर्मिण्याम् ‘*mithunavyavaayadharminyaam*’.

Prajapati Daksha then married Asikree, the daughter of Panchajana. They had many sons, who were called the Haryashva and the Shabalaashva. Daksha told them all to procreate, so they went to the Narayana Sarovara to practice asceticism first. However, Naradji influenced them into giving up worldly desires and becomes ascetics.

Daksha Prajapati was furious when he heard about this development. People always talk about how dearly fathers love their sons. They will grieve if anyone convinces the sons to give up worldly joys before they are mature. Hence, Daksha’s anger was quite natural.

Just then, Naradji came to Daksha Prajapati. Daksha Prajapati abused him left and right, saying, “You Tantukrintan (strummer of strings)! You have destroyed my lineage! You have turned my little ones – who don’t even know what is good and what is bad – into beggars! I gave them birth with the hope of making them into family men. It is because you stay in one place that you have the opportunity to spoil people. Now, go – you will never again be able to linger in any place for more than two ghadis\*.”

Naradji accepted the curse with joy. He said, “Dakshaji, you have done me a great favor. Had you not given me this curse, I would have made a hut or an ashram, gathered disciples and accumulated worldly possessions. Now, I will not remain anywhere for long. I will go around freely. You have made me a virakta\* by giving me this curse. I thank you for this.”

एतावान् साधुवादो हि तितिक्षेत्तेश्वरः स्वयम्।

*E`taavaan saadhuvaado hi titikshe`te`shvarah svayam.*

Shri Shukadevji pointed out that Naradji could easily have retaliated by cursing Daksha in return, but he did not misuse his spiritual powers. The sadhuta\* in this world reposes in a capable person restraining himself, and refusing to retaliate even when people misbehave.

Daksha began to think that it was futile to have sons, if they were to be turned into monks, instead of increasing the world’s population. Hearing this, Brahmaji came to Daksha and counseled him. “Your sons are influenced into becoming monks, so have daughters. Then, no monk will try to take them away!”

This gives a clear indication that our forefathers had the knowledge for choosing the sex of the child they wished to have. Daksha obeyed Brahmaji, and had daughters. He got them married to men of virtue and greatness, and they had so many children in all, that the entire populace was called ‘Dakshayinee’. ‘Daksha’ means ‘a skillful person who knows the principles of Dharma, and controls his own mind and the world.’ All the people in the world are his daughter’s descendents, and thus his, as well. The Shrimad Bhagwat gives thousands of names and their descriptions, but I merely make a brief mention, due to shortage of time.

Aditi and Diti were both Daksha’s daughters. From the adhyatmik\* angle, these are vrittis\*. They were married to Kashyapji. You have been told earlier that Kashyapji was a form of the Lord. The Sanskrit meaning indicates that Kashyap is the observer.

Kashyap’s wife Aditi is a unifying tendency. She gave birth to the Adityas\*. The root diametrically opposite is ‘deen kshaye`, making the word diti. Diti

is Kashyapji's other wife, who gives birth to the Daityas. Those whose tendencies are lowly and unrighteous are called daityas – the sons of Diti! And Aditi's son, Aditya\*, brightens the whole world, prompting people towards Dharmic\* activities like the sandhya vandan\*, etc.

One of Aditi's sons was Indra. He was crowned King of all the Devtas, and called Devraj\*. One who possesses supreme glory is called Indra. He is the Lord of action. He abides in our arms, and it is his strength which enables us to work. The adhidaiva\* is Indra, the adhibhoota\* is the arm, and the one who inspires – the foundation of all creation, the sarvadhishthaataa\* Narayana - is the adhyatma\*. For every action, the wish is born in the mind, and the organs of action respond according to the mind's instructions.

If you were to ask, where does aishwarya\* abide? The direct answer is that it abides in action. Glory comes to the one who acts. An idle, lazy person who puts in no effort, can never make any progress. All achievement is the result of effort.

Indra's magnificence increased when he was crowned King of the Devtas. All the great Devtas began to eulogise him. All this went to his head, and he strayed from the path of righteousness and decorum.

इन्द्रस्त्रिभुवनैश्वर्यमदोल्लङ्घितसत्पथः । ६.७.२.

*Indrastribhuvanaishvaryamadollanghitasatpathah. 6.7.2.*

Worldly success is heady, and the intoxication results in the person overstepping the boundaries of Dharma, decorum and decency.

हृष्टो दृष्यति दृप्तो धर्मम् अतिक्रामति ।

*Hristo drishyati dripto dharmam atikraamati.*

One day, when Indra was holding court, Vrihaspati – the Guru of the Devtas – entered the court. Vrihaspati knows all the Vedas and Shastras. During the swasti vaachan\*, it is always said:

ॐ स्वस्तिन इन्द्रो वृद्धश्रवाः स्वस्तिनः पूषा विश्ववेदाः ।

स्वस्तिनस्तारिक्षो अरिष्टनेमिः स्वस्तिनो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु ॥

*Om svastina indro vridhashravaah svastinah pooshaa vishvave`daah,*

*Svastinastaariksho arishtane`mih svastino vrihaspatirdadhaatu.*

This mantra contains every kind of grammatical link. As per the mantra, Indra and Vrihaspati should always remain united in good will. However, what happened was that Indra observed Vrihaspati enter, but turned his gaze



away, violating the codes of etiquette. He was carried away by the pride of his elevated position. Vrihaspati felt, “My disciple, Indra, is overcome by arrogance. Arrogance is no good – it must be broken.” Thinking thus, Vrihaspati vanished.

When the Daityas heard that Vrihaspati had left Indra’s court because Indra failed to show him proper respect, they desired to take advantage of the situation, and went to their Guru, Shukracharya.

You see, Vrihaspati – the Guru of the Devtas – has wisdom and prudence, while Shukracharya – the Guru of the Daityas – has power and cunning. The Sanskrit language gives one meaning of the word ‘shukra’ as virility. The Devtas have wisdom in the form of Vrihaspati and the Daityas have strength in the form of Shukracharya. They also have siddhi\*, mantra\*, and tantra\*. Shukracharya increases demons with all these powers.

When Shukracharya heard that Vrihaspati had left the Devtas, he advised the Daityas to attack the Devtas. When attacked by the Daityas, the Devtas searched in vain for their Guru to guide them. Ultimately, they were forced to flee and hide in the forests.

Eventually, all the Devtas went to Brahmaji, who is the Great Grandfather of all the Devtas and the Daityas. He has equal goodwill for both. If you wonder how Brahmaji is their Great Grandfather, you will be reminded that the Devtas and Daityas are sons of Kashyap. Kashyapji is the son of Marichi\*, who is Brahmaji’s son. So, Brahmaji becomes the Great Grandfather of both groups, and it is natural that he should have equal affection for both. Despite this, he gives the best guidance to whoever seeks his help and advice.

So Brahmaji told the Devtas to get a purohit\*, and obtain the knowledge from him, about how to achieve victory. The Devtas went to Vishwaroop, even though Vishwaroop’s mother did not come from a good lineage. Her lineage was a combination of Devtas, Daityas and humans. Vishwaroop had three faces. He would drink the elixir of heaven with one mouth, drink wine with another and eat food through the third – सोमपीथ सुरापीथ अन्नाद ‘*somapeetha suraapeetha annaada*’.

The Devtas begged Vishwaroop to become their purohit. At first he refused, saying that he did not wish to align himself with any one group. Later he relented. He felt that it would be improper to refuse the appeals of so many great demigods., who had come to seek his help. “Come, I accept to be your purohit,” he said.

Then Vishwaroop taught Indra the science of the Narayana Kavacha\*. The eighth chapter of the sixth Skandha of the Bhagwat describes this Narayana Kavacha. Vishwaroop also gave full instructions about the method of

purifying the body, and the nyas\* of twelve, eight and six word mantras, in the descending and reverse orders.

Nyas is the process of establishing a Devta in every limb and organ. A human body is composed of bones, flesh and skin – it is totally impure. It can, however, be given a degree of divinity by superimposing mantra nyas\*, Devnyas\*, srishti nyas\*, sthitinyas\*, pralaynyas\*, vyapak nyas\*, and others. The upasana shastras are full of the science of such rituals. When the Naarayana Kavacha is chanted, demigods are established in every part of the body, which then acquires a degree of divinity.

When Indra acquired the Narayana Kavacha from his new Guru, Vishwaroop, and learnt its proper usage, he attacked the Daityas and defeated them. He regained his position as King of heaven.

As mentioned before, Vishwaroop's ancestors consisted of Daityas as well as Devtas. So, during his ritual fire worship, he favored the Devtas at times, but secretly made offerings for the Daityas in between. At times his oblations were for the Lord, and at times they were for selfish gain. Indra caught him red handed and killed him on the spot. Now he was faced with Brahmahatya\*, because he had killed his purohit. Indra folded his hands and accepted his guilt. He did not try to make excuses, saying he had killed Vishwaroop unknowingly. It was Indra's nobility which made him accept his guilt without hesitation or fear.

The entire Earth was filled with a feeling of forgiveness. People always feel sympathy towards those who have modesty and humility, admit their mistakes honestly, and have soft and gentle hearts. However, when someone raises his head with pride, declaring that he has done no wrong, his arrogance increases and he loses the sympathy of all.

Having won the sympathy of the entire creation, Indra divided the Brahmahatya into four portions. One portion for the Earth, one for water, one for the trees and one for women. All four lovingly accepted to share the punishment, for the sake of honoring Indra. Thus freed from the consequences of his deed, Indra regained full glory.

Now, when Vishwaroop's father, Tvashta, heard that Indra had killed his son, he started a havan, based on the Vedas, to harm Indra.

The Vedic mantras possess immense power. Katyayan\* has written many commentaries upon the ancient treatise on rituals, of every mantra of the Yajurveda. He has described in detail which mantra can be used to obtain which worldly desire. It is called 'Yajurvedhan-sutram'. The routine of teaching the Katyayan Shroat Sutra is no longer practiced. People would have lapped it up eagerly, had it come from abroad, and foreigners had acknowledged its value and utility!

When Tvasta offered a sacrifice for harming Indra, he uttered the words इन्द्रशत्रो विवर्धस्व '*indrashatro vivardhasva*', which means, 'May Indra's enemy grow'. A huge Asura called Vritra emerged from the fire. All the Vedas describe Vritrasura\* indicating that this is a power which engulfs the ability of a person to think clearly, just as fog blocks out the rays of the sun. So, as soon as Vritrasura emerged, the whole world became dark. Accompanied by well-armed Daityas, he attacked Indra.

Now, the story of Vritrasura is a long one, so instead of going into it in detail, I will just say that a long and fierce war ensued between Vritrasura and Indra. Finally, Indra challenged Vritrasura to come forward. When Vritrasura came directly before Indra, he saw the vajra\* in Indra's hand.

Listen to the background of this vajra. Earlier, in the same war, Vritrasura had gained victory over the Devtas. The defeated Devtas went to the Lord, and told Him of their woes.

Lord Vishnu is always partial to His devotees. You were told earlier, that unlike Dharmraj\*, the Lord is not confined to follow ordinary laws of sin and merit. He favors those who love Him. There is no doubt that the bhakti sampradaya\* would disappear if the Lord didn't show such partiality. How could people feel love and devotion for the Lord, if He didn't save them, help them to progress, reduce their suffering and help them to overcome their faults?

So, the Lord Vishnu has to favor His devotees. The Daityas are aware of this the fact that the Lord sings the praises of those who sing His praises – भजन्तम् भजमानस्य '*bhajantam bhajamaanasya*'.

Hearing their problem, the Lord Vishnu advised Indra, "The father of Vishwaroop – who you killed – has created Vritrasura, through a havan. He has undertaken a very powerful ritual for your destruction. I will not intercede at this point, because it would not be proper for Me to do so. Go to Dadhichi Rishi\* and ask him for his bones. When he gives you his bones, make a vajra from them. Vritrasura will be killed only by that vajra,"

It seemed impossible to the Devtas that Dadhichi Rishi would give them his bones while he lived. Still, they went to him, as directed by the Lord, and told him why they had come.

Dadhichi asked, "Devtas, don't you know how dearly everybody loves his body? Even if the Lord Vishnu were to come Himself, to beg for my bones – भिक्षमाणाया विष्णवे '*bhikshamaanaaya vishnave*' – how could I give them to Him?"

ननु स्वार्थपरो लोको न वेद परसंकटम्।

यदि वेद न याचेत नेति नाह यदीश्वरः ॥ ६.१०.६

*Nanu svaarthaparo loko na ve`da parasankatam,  
Yadi ve`da na yaache`tan e`ti naaha yadeeshvarah.  
6.10.6.*

The people in this world are so selfish that they do not understand other people's difficulties. They would not ask for help if they understood the other person's difficulty. The one who asks for help should understand the situation of the person he appeals to. By the same token, the other person will always extend all possible help, if he understands the difficulty of the person who seeks it. The fact is that everyone in this world is engrossed with his own selfish interest. So, Devtas, tell me how can I give my bones to you?"

The Devtas replied, "Sir, it is the nature of great people that they give up even their bodies, to help others who are suffering. It is the highest Dharma to help others, even if it means sacrificing one's life to do so. This body is destined to die, eventually, so what can be better than it's being given up for the sake of doing good to others?"

Dadhichi said, "Devtas, it was only to hear you speak about Dharma, that I had refused to comply with your request. त्यजन्तं संत्यजाम्यहम् 'Tyajantam santyajaamyaham' - this body will leave me anyway, so why shouldn't I leave it now?" Dadhichi went into a samadhi. He immersed himself into the Brahman. His spirit left his body.

Dadhichi was a great devotee of the Lord Shiva. His greatness is described repeatedly in the Shiva Puran\*. He is the actual Dadhyangaatharvana. Dadhyang and Dadhichi are two formations of the same word. He was skilled in the science of Brahmavidya\*. He had even cut off his head, and given a discourse through the head of a horse attached to his neck. Later, his original head was replaced. Birth and death held no meaning for him.

Indra's personality was radiant, when he went into the battlefield with the vajra (made from Dadhichi's bones) in his hand. The vajra was filled with the spiritual power of Dadhichi's tapasya. Secondly, it had the sanction of the Lord Vishnu. These two factors gave a fresh impetus to the Devtas, and they attacked the Daityas with renewed vigor. The Daityas began to scatter and flee. Vritrasura tried to stop them, urging them to fight with courage, because death would, in any case, come one day. However, the Devtas' ferocity induced such fear that they paid no heed to Vritrasura. The Devtas continued to attack the fleeing Daityas.

Vritrasura stood alone before Indra and rebuked him, saying, "What kind of Dharma is it that you attack those who flee in fear? You claim to be a great

Devta and on the other hand, you kill those in retreat? Come! I stand before you! Attack me.”

Vritrasura and Indra fought grimly. While fighting, Vritrasura experienced a surge of such bhakti that wonderful words of praise burst from his lips. He said:

त्रैवर्गिकायासविघातमस्मत्पतिर्विधत्ते पुरुषस्य शक्र ।

ततोनुमेयो भगवत्प्रसादो यो दुर्लभोऽकिंचनगोचरोऽन्यैः ॥ ६.११.२३.

*Traivargakaayaasavidhaatamasmat patirvidhatte` purushasya shakra,*

*Tatonume`yo bhgavatprasaado yo durlabhoakinchanagocharoanyaih.*

6.11.23.

“Indra, I know that victory belongs to you. However, the Lord’s Grace is not on those, to whom He bestows victory, glory and the Kingdom. His Grace is on those He considers His own, and from whom He snatches everything away.”

Just see the unshakable faith in Vritrasura’s words. How good it would be if people had such staunch faith!

Vritrasura said, “Indra, the Lord will give you the Glory, because you are the outsider; and He will take it away from me, because I am His own. I know how deeply He loves me.”

As he spoke, Vritrasura felt as though the Lord actually stood before him. The four verses of praise spoken by him are called the Chatusloki Bhagwat\*. Listen to them:

अहं हरे तव पादैकमूलदासानुदासो भवितास्मि भूयः ।

मनः स्मरेतासुपतेर्गुणांस्ते गृणीत वाक्कर्म करोतु कायः ॥

न नाकपृष्ठं न च पारमेष्ठ्यं न सार्वभौमं न रसाधिपत्यम् ।

न योगसिद्धीरपुनर्भवं वा समंजस त्वा विरहय्य काङ्क्षे ॥

अजातपक्षा इव मातरं खगाः स्तन्यं यथा वत्सतराः क्षुधार्ताः ।

प्रियं प्रियेव व्युषितं विषण्णा मनोऽरविन्दाक्ष दिदृक्षते त्वाम् ।

ममोत्तमश्लोकजनेषु सख्यं संसारचक्रे भ्रमतः स्वकर्मभिः ।

त्वन्माययाऽऽमात्मजदारगेहेष्वासक्तचित्तस्य न नाथ भूयात् ॥ ६.११.२४-२५-२६-२७

*Aham hare`tava paadaikamoladaasaanudaaso bhavitaasmi bhooyah,*

*Manah smare`taasupate`rgunaanste`grineeta vakkarma karotu kaayah.*

*Na naakaprishtam na cha paarame`shtyam na saarvabhoulam na rasaadhipatyam,*

*Na yogasiddheerapunarbhavam vaa samanajasa tvaa virahayya kaankshe`.*

*Ajaatapakshaa iva maataram khagaah stanyam yathaa vatsataraah  
kshudhaartaah,  
Priyam priye`va vyushitam vishanna manoaravindaaksha didrikshate`  
tvaam.  
Mamottamashlokajane`shu sakhyam sansaarachakre` bhramatah  
svakarmabhih,  
Tvanmaayayaatmaatmajadaarage`he`shvaasakta chittasya na naatha  
bhooyaat.  
6.11.24,25,26,27.*

Vritrasura began to pray, “Lord, I do not desire mukti. I desire to be born again, in order to become the servant of Your servant, in my next birth. Let my mind dwell upon Your qualities, my head bow at Your feet, and my body be occupied in serving You. I have no wish to achieve the status of Brahma or Indra. I wish only to get the dust of Your feet. I surrender to Your feet. What do I need worldly goods for?

O lotus-eyed Lord! My heart yearns only to see You. My longing is akin to that of little birds sitting hungrily in a nest, waiting for their mother to bring them food. It is akin to the hungry little calf, tied to a post, wondering when his mother will finish grazing and come to feed him. It is akin to the wife, who waits for her husband to return from a long journey. I don’t care if I am born repeatedly, but Grace me that I always have the company of Your devotees. Grace me that wherever I go, I see the faces of those who love You.”

Then Vritrasura’s demonic tendencies rose up again, and he lifted his spear to attack Indra. Indra cut off his arm with the Vajra, but he attacked so fiercely with his other arm, that Indra’s vajra fell on the ground.

Vritrasura said, “Indra, don’t be ashamed. This is not the time for shame. Pick up your fallen vajra. You have obtained it by the Grace of God. The Lord is nurturing you. So, pick it up and kill me with it.” Indra picked up the vajra again.

When Vritrasura tried to attack again, Indra cut off his other arm. Shri Shukadevji Maharaj said, “Parikshit, when Indra lifted the vajra to kill Vritrasura, he spoke words of praise without the slightest rancor –

इन्द्रो वृत्रवचः श्रुत्वा गतालीकमपूजयत्।

गृहीतवज्रः प्रहसंस्तमाह गतविस्मयः॥ ६.१२.१८.

*Indro vritraavachah shrutvaa gataaleekamapoojayat,*

*Griheetavajrah prahasanstamaaha gataivismayah.*

6.12.18.

You will find the same mantra in the Rig Veda – इन्द्रो वृत्राय वज्रमुद्यतेक्षत ‘*indro vritrayaa vajramudyate`kshata`*. The meaning is that Indra lifted the vajra to kill Vritrasura. Another mantra of the Vedas is वज्रहस्तपुरन्दरः ‘*vajrahastapurandarah`*, which means that Indra keeps a vajra in his hand.

Indra had cut off both the arms of Vritrasura. So, when he lifted the vajra to kill the demon, Vritrasura opened his huge mouth and swallowed Indra along with the elephant he rode. Indra cut open his stomach from inside and came out. Then he killed Vritrasura by cutting off his head. A bright glow of light emerged from Vritrasura’s body and merged into the form of the Lord. Indra became King once more. All were happy, but Indra was worried about the Brahmahatya he had incurred again. Earlier, he had divided it into four parts, but how could he stave off the consequences this time?

The fact is that Indra had been reluctant to kill Vritrasura because of the Brahmahatya factor. He had done so only because the terrified Rishis and Devtas begged him to do so.

Indra knew that Vritrasura was a devotee of the Lord. He had, moreover, been born of an excellent seed – the ritual fire – with mantras of welcome. So, it was completely unrighteous to kill him.

There is a common Dharma for common people. A sentence in the Vedas says मा हिंस्याद् सर्वाणि भूतानि ‘*maa hinsayaad sarvaani bhootaani`*, which means that do not kill or cause pain to any creature.

Indra’s fears on this score were justified. When Indra killed Vritrasura at the behest of the Devtas and Rishis, Brahmahatya appeared before him. So terrifying was her form that Indra fled, and hid in the Mansarovara\*.

All three worlds were anxious when Indra disappeared. They placed Nahush on the throne, but when he misbehaved with the Mahatmas, he was turned into a snake and removed from the throne.

Then Indra found Vrahspati.

King Parikshit placed a question to Shri Shukadevji about this.

रजस्तमः स्वभावस्य ब्रह्मन् वृत्रस्य पाप्मनः ।

नारायणे भगवति कथमासीद् दृढा मतिः ॥ ६.१४.१

*Rajatamah svabhaavasya Brahman vritrasya paapmanah,*

*Naaraayane` bhagavati kathamaaseed dridhaa matih.*

6.14.1.

Note the word ‘katham’. The word ‘kathaa’ is routinely understood to mean ‘a story’, in Hindi. In the Rig Veda, however, it has been used to ask ‘why so?’

केन प्रकारेण इति कथा, येन प्रकारेण इति यथा,  
तेन प्रकारेण इति तथा, सर्वेण प्रकारेण इति सर्वथा।

*Ke`na prakaare`na iti katha, ye`na prakare`na iti yathaa,  
Te`na prakaare`na iti tathaa, sarve`na prakaare`na prakaare`na iti  
sarvathaa.*

So, when Raja Parikshit heard about Vritrasura’s devotion for the Lord, he asked about the background.

Vritrasura was a demon; he was fighting the Devtas. How and why did such devotion develop in his heart?” he asked.

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj replied, “Parikshit, there was a great king who lived in the region of Shurasena’s capital, Mathura. His name was Chitraketu\*. He had great wealth and power, and many Queens. His people were happy, but King Chitraketu was sad.

One day, Angira Rishi came to King Chitraketu. The King welcomed him with great reverence. Later, the Rishi asked him, “King, your Queens are all happy, your people are all happy, and your ministers are all loyal to you. Then why do I see a shadow of sorrow on your face? Tell me, what is troubling you?”

You must realize that the sages of yore would convey the essence of Dharma through their queries of well being. The points mentioned by the Rishi were an indication of the ideal situation.

The King replied, ‘Sir, you are right in saying that I am not happy. No doubt I have all I need, including Queens and manliness. However, I am sad because I do not have a son.’”

The Rishi told the King that his fortune indicated that he would have a son. “I can definitely grant you a son, but he will be the cause for both joy and sorrow. It is not that he will bring you only joy.”

You see, what is to be, is what is granted as a boon. Nothing new is created. One only gets an indication of what is to come. Horoscopes and astrology also give indications only of what lies ahead.

Angira rishi prepared a vessel for the oblation, and offered it to the Tavshata Devta. He gave the rest of the potion to the senior-most Queen of Chitraketu, and departed. The Queen conceived, and had a son. Chitraketu was filled with happiness. The whole kingdom was joyful. All the Queens celebrated.



See how things change with time. The King began to favor the senior-most Queen, causing jealousy amongst the other Queens. They had the child poisoned. The death of the child turned all the joy into deep sorrow.

It is the same with the world. The Upanishads have stated clearly, प्रियः त्वां रोत्स्यति '*priyah tvaam rotsyati*' – the one you love will bring you tears; you will have to be bound to him. So, this mortal world is just not worth getting attached to.

Angira and Narad came, when the palace was filled with lamentations. Chitraketu did not even recognize them, as Angira reminded him of the boon of the son and the warning of this being a mixed blessing. He also introduced Naradji.

Naradji and Angira tried their best to counsel the King. They used their spiritual power to summon the spirit of the dead child, and told him to return to his parents.

The spirit said, "I do not even recognize them. I do not know who they are, or in which birth of mine were they my parents. I have been born millions of times, in various species, and have had millions of parents, so I am unable to recognize them."

When the King and Queen heard these words, their attachment for their son evaporated. They performed the last rites. Naradji gave Chitraketu a mantra for his salvation, and the king dutifully worshipped the Lord in the form of the Shesha\*. The worship achieved success in just seven days, and the King had a vision of the Lord as the Shesha. He began to praise Him:

अजित जितः सममतिभिः साधुभिर्भवान् जितात्मभिर्भवता ।

विजितास्तेऽपि च भजतामकामात्मनां य आत्मदोऽतिकरुणः ॥ ६.१६.३४

*Ajita jitah samamatibhih saadhubhirbhavaan jitaatmabhirbhavataa,  
Vijitaaste`api cha bhajataamakaamaatmanaam ya aatmadoatikarunah.  
6.16.34.*

"Lord, You are ever victorious. You are so overcome by compassion that good people who possess equanimity, win You over. You have also won them over, by Your various qualities. You give Yourself to whoever worships You selflessly. You are blessed. You have such power that You can destroy all the faults and weaknesses of men."

After many more words of praise, the Lord Shesha gave Chitraketu a boon, and made him a siddha purusha\*. He also gave him an air plane. Chitraketu then began to go around with the Gandharvas\*, listening to divine music and obtaining many worldly pleasures.

One day, Chitraketu was taking a ride on his plane and he reached the Kailash mountain of Lord Shankar. He was unfamiliar with the habits and customs of that region. He should have known that just as every country has its own laws and customs, the norms of the Devtas are different from those of humans. Those who criticize the actions of the Devtas do not realize that the Devtas are not guided by our norms.

Chitraketu made the same mistake. He saw that the Lord Shankar was giving a discourse upon tattvagnan\* to Rishis and Munis\*, with his consort, Gauriji, seated on his lap.

Here, it is important to understand that the fruit of tattvagnan is not obtained after death. It is not a post dated cheque – it is a cash profit! It gives the experience of leading a fully liberated life, free of dualities and imbalances.

The Lord Shankar is the personification of tattvagnan. He spoke with complete absence of any type of differentiation or tendency. Chitraketu's thinking was of an ordinary level, and his restricted concepts of decorum made him think that it was improper of the Lord Shankar to have Gauriji on his lap, while giving a discourse to the sages. He began to accuse the Lord Shankar of impropriety and hypocrisy, saying, "What kind of a tattvagnani is this, who speaks loftily with his wife seated on his lap, in public?"

Lord Shankar just smiled when he heard these aspersions. He let them pass because he felt that they were not of the slightest importance. People mutter in their sleep. Those who lack the knowledge of the ultimate Truth, wander blindly in the darkness of illusions. The Lord Shankar was, therefore, totally unaffected by Chitraketu's words.

Gauriji, however, was angered. "Have you become our ruler these days?" She asked angrily. "Have you been given the authority to punish people for what you consider to be improper? But, my son, never again misbehave this way with great people – न कर्ता पुत्र किल्बिषम् 'na kartaa putra kilbisham'. As a result of this impertinence, you will have to go into the Asura yoni\*."

Hearing Gauriji's words, Chitraketu immediately got down from his plane and bowed to her. 'Deviji\*,' he said, "I have not come to ask your pardon –

प्रतिगृह्णामि ते शापमात्मनोऽजलिनाम्बिके ।

दैवर्मर्त्याय यत्प्रोक्तं पूर्वदिष्टं हि तस्य तत् ॥ ६.१७.१७

*Pratigrihnaami te` shaapamaatmanonjalinaambike` ,*

*Daivarmartyaaya yatproktam poorvadishtam hi tasya tat.*

6.17.17.

I fold my hands and accept your curse with joy. That is because whatever the Devtas do for humans is merely a forecast of events to come. So, I do not

ask you to forgive me, but I do request you to erase any ill will you may feel for me. It does not matter to me whether I attain the body of a Devta or a Daitya. Whatever type of body I obtain, God will always be with me, and I will continue to love Him.”

Hearing Chitraketu’s words, the Lord Shankar told Gauriji, “See the greatness of the Lord’s devotees. Despite your curse, Chitraketu feels no rancor. The Lord’s devotees are always like that.”

Answering Parikshit’s question, Shri Shukadevji Maharaj said, “King, it was that same Chitraketu who became Vritrasura, and this is why his devotion for the Lord remained unaffected by his becoming a Daitya.”

Now, when Vritrasura died, and Indra regained his throne to undertake an Ashvamedha Yagya\*, the Daityas began to roam the forests in fear. Their mother, Diti, was distressed to see their plight. A mother’s love for her children is supreme. The son is the personified portion of the mother’s heart. Her blood turns into milk for his nourishment. Love has no form, but it takes the form of milk, and enters the stomach of her baby. A mother loves her child more than anyone loves anyone else in the world.

When Diti was deeply distressed, Kashyapji came to her ashram for a few days, to give her solace. A husband is bound to have sympathy when he sees his wife suffer. Diti gave him such loving service that she won him over completely.

एवं स्त्रिया जडीभूतो विद्वानपि विदग्धया ।

वाढमित्याह विवशो न तच्चित्रं हि योषति ॥ ६.१८.२९.

*E`vam striyaa jadeebhooto vidvaanapi vidagdhayaa,*

*Vaadhamityaah vivasho na tachchitram hi yoshiti.*

6.18.29.

Kashyap Maharaj was wise and learned. However, he was so influenced by Diti’s loving service that despite being a detached observer, he unconsciously identified with her, and offered her a boon.

Shri Shukadevji adds a rider here, न तच्चित्रं हि योषति ‘*na tacchitram hi yoshiti*’.

There is nothing surprising about the fact that a woman can control her husband through loving service, because a woman’s heart is predominantly full of love.

Diti saw that Kashyapji was pleased with her, and said, “Indra killed two of my sons, and is torturing the others. Please give me a son who can kill Indra – पुत्रमिन्द्रहणं वृणे ‘*putramindrahanam vrine*’”.

Kashyapji lowered his head when he heard this request. Indra is also Kashyapji’s son, by his other wife, Aditi. Diti was asking for a son who

would kill his other son! Kashyapji was stunned to think that his son would kill another son of his; that Diti's son would kill Aditi's son. He felt deeply unhappy and perplexed. Then he folded his hands before the Lord and said, "Thy will be done."

Kashyapji told Diti about an anushtaan\* which would last one year. This included japa\* and ritual worship. He told her that if she could undertake this ritual faultlessly for one year, she would have a son who would kill Indra.

Diti was delighted. She started the anushtaan without delay. The method is described in the eighteenth and nineteenth chapters of the sixth Skandha of the Shrimad Bhagwat. Just a couple of days before its completion, Diti made a small mistake. Indra came to know about this, because he had taken on the garb of a bramchari and was serving Diti to help her complete the vrata\* successfully.

Indra entered Diti's womb, when she made a small mistake. He cut the baby into seven parts, but the baby did not die. Indra proceeded to cut each part into seven parts. The baby was now in forty nine parts.

You see, the wind which blows in our world is of forty nine kinds. The shastras have enumerated them, given their names and described the actions of each.

When we think about this, we understand the adhibhoota\* form of the forty nine pieces in Diti's womb. When they manifest in their adhidaiva\* forms, they were called the Marutganas\*. Indra was the fiftieth to come out of Diti's womb, along with them.

Didi asked Indra how it happened that her prayer for one son resulted in her getting forty nine sons, and how he came to be with them.

Indra said, "Mother, I served you because I came to know of your intention. When I saw the mistake you made, I entered your womb. However, your intensity and sincerity were so strong that the baby did not die even when I cut it into forty nine pieces. They are all alive, and have become my eternal brothers. Please be gracious, and let me have them. I will keep them with me, in the form of Marutganas."

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj told Parikshit that Diti was satisfied with Indra's sincerity, and permitted him to take the Marutganas. Indra took them to his land and made them all Devtas.

How would Diti's worship of the Lord ever result in Daityas being born, and killing Indra? The effect of worship is that even demons become Devtas, and those destined to die become immortal. The Lord is sarvaatma\*. He has no ill will for any, no negative tendencies, no faults, and no aberrations

whatsoever. Whoever meditates upon such a Paramatma becomes the Paramatma, Himself.

After narrating the story of the Marutganas, Shri Shukadevji Maharaj concluded the sixth Skandha by describing the punsavana\* vrata, and embarked on the seventh Skandha.

The seventh Skandha is called the 'Ooti\* Skandha. It contains fifteen chapters. Right at the start, Raja Parikshit comments that the Lord has equal good will for all, is loved by all, is everybody's Atma, and wants the well being of all. "Then why does He repeatedly favor the Devtas and kill the Daityas?" asked Parikshit. "I have some doubts about His good will for both. Please clear my doubts."

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj praised Parikshit's question and explained. "Actually, a person's life is molded by the desires in his heart. The Lord Grants or rejects, according to the desire of the individual. There is a time for sattvaguna\* to rise in Prakriti, and goodness increases. Sometimes, it is time for rajoguna\*, or tamoguna\* to rise. The Lord gives powers to each tendency when its time comes. At the rise of sattvaguna, He gives strength to the Devtas, and at the rise of rajoguna, it is the Daityas who receive His strength. It is His strength in them all.

The Lord mixes with the time and gives strength to the appropriate item. Rice grows in its time, and wheat grows in its season, by His Grace. Similarly, all the plants and trees, animals and birds, men and women, get their strength from the Lord.

You are aware that electricity is everywhere. It creates light in a bulb, wind through the fan, heat in a heater, and ice in a refrigerator. In the same way, it is the power of the Lord in all we see.

It is not as though the Lord gets annoyed because He gets no gifts or worship from the daityas. Nor does He help the devtas because they offer Him gifts and worship! Annoyance and pleasure are reactions connected to the body. Worldly people consider some to be friends and some to be foes, because they identify with their bodies. The Lord never has a body like ours, composed of the five elements; hence there is no question of His having any feeling of duality, like attachment and aversion."

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj went on to say, "Parikshit, Naradji had told your Grandfather, Yudhishtira, some points about the samatvaguna\* of the Lord. This was during the ashvamedha Yagya\* done by Yudhishtira, where Naradji was present.

The manner of conversation of those times is noteworthy. Modern inventions are a result of mathematical calculations. All the action in the world has fire and wind as its source, but they are unable to give the

knowledge of the Brahman. The Kenopanishad contains a story. It says that Agni\* was sent to locate the Brahman, but the power of heat could not reveal the Brahman. The wind was sent next, but there is an order in the movement of the wind, and it tried to locate the Brahman through calculation. The Brahman, however, eludes all calculations – including those of the latest computers. Then Indra came. Indra is the Devta of action, but the Brahman cannot be reached through any action. Ultimately, when Brahmavidya\* emerged, then the mental mode took on the form of the Brahman. The experience of the Brahman is possible only through Brahmavidya. Studying the Vedas is the only method for obtaining knowledge about the tattva\*, or the shashvat satya\*, because the knowledge of the Vedas has not come from any human being. New inventions are definitely the result of modern thought patterns, but the topic of the Paramatma can be understood only by the ancient examples.

Therefore, Shukadevji Maharaj says, “Parikshit, the spirit of Shishupala merged into the form of the Lord at Yudhishtira’s Yagya. Astonished to see this, Yudhishtira asked Naradji how this could have happened, since Shishupala had always hated Shri Krishna so much.

In reply, Devarshi\* Narada told Yudhishtira the story of Prahlada. He explained that it is essential for the mind to be focused on the Lord. It makes no difference whether a person is a Devta or a Daitya. Prahlad was born a Daitya, but the Lord protected him. The Lord never pushes away anyone who has once attached himself to the Lord. The connection could be with kama, krodha, lobha or bhaya\* - कथंचिन्नेक्षते पृथक् ‘*kathanchinne`kshate` prithak`*’.

You see a child run towards his father, saying, “I will hit you!” with his fingers curled into a fist. When he reaches his father, the father just lifts him up and gives him a hug, thinking, “This is my innocent little child.” The father is not offended when the child tugs at his beard or pulls his moustache! Nowadays, mothers sometimes get annoyed when their baby soils their clothes, but they never feel that the baby belongs to someone else! In the same way, one can attach one’s self to the Lord by any emotion, and the Lord never feels that this person is not His.

Naradji told Yudhishtira that Prahlad was the son of Hiranyakashipu. Hiranyakashipu and his brother, Hiranyaksha, were, in their past lives, Jay and Vijay, attendants of the Lord Vishnu. They became Asuras due to the curse of the Sanakadis. Even though Prahlad was born in this lineage, he became a supreme devotee of the Lord. He had all the virtues described in this world. So what if the Devtas were his enemies? When the question

cropped up, at their court, as to who is the Lord's greatest devotee, they were unanimous in declaring that Prahlad is a model devotee.

Naradji described how distressed Hiranyaksha's wife and mother were, when the Lord Varaha killed him. Hiranyakashipu had gone to console them, and spoken of the philosophy of the Vedas.

Vedanta\* can be either Asura or Daiva. It is Asura Vedanta, when it is used to justify a wrong, and Daiva Vedanta, when used to help others.

Hiranyakashipu counseled his brother's wife and mother, saying, "The soul never dies. The body of everything which is born has to die, anyway. So, do not grieve." To elaborate further, he told them the story of Suyagya, which is given in the Puranas.

There is a similarity in the story of Suyagya which is given in the Rig Veda and the one given in the Shrimad Bhagwat.

Hiranyakashipu said that when Suyagya died in battle, his family crowded round him, refusing to let him go. Yamaraj took the form of a child, and told them that despite being aged, they had failed to obtain understanding. "The man has gone where he came from. Why do you grieve for him? If your grief could have helped in any way, or brought him back to life, or induced another to appear in his place, it would be proper to grieve. However, what is the use of weeping and wailing for someone who will never return?"

Hiranyakashipu then gave the example of the birds. He told them about how a pair of birds returned with food for the little birds waiting in the nest, only to find the babies trapped in the net of a hunter. Their attachment induced them to fly into the net, and they were also trapped. "So, why don't you accept the fact that death surrounds us all, including you. Hiranyaksha has departed today. You will have to depart some day. So why waste time on futile tears?" he asked.

Hiranyakashipu thus gave such a demonic counseling to his family members that for a while they ceased to grieve. After this, it came to his mind that he should try to become immortal. He had given others a sermon upon the body's being transient, but for himself, he wanted to find a way to avoid death.

It is the same with the people in this world. Well, my brother, why do you give so much importance to your body, and think – for others – that the body is unimportant? You do not hesitate to take what you want, even if it belongs to others, but when it comes to giving something to someone, you find every excuse to avoid giving! This is a demonic practice. It is to be given up, not retained.

So, in keeping with his demonic decision, Hiranyakashipu undertook a very severe tapasya. His tapasya was so intense that a flame emerged from his

head and began to burn heaven. This caused a great anxiety among the Devtas. They went to Brahmaji, demanding to know if he was aware of what was happening. “We have come to inform you that Hiranyakashipu wishes to become the Brahma, through his tapasya. Not only that, he wants to destroy Vishnu, too, and snatch away all the havishya\* for himself. Please do something!”

Brahmaji was fully aware of what was happening. He went to Hiranyakashipu, and saw anthills had formed all around him, as he sat doing his tapasya. Brahmaji’s heart melted. He sprinkled some holy water from his kamandalu\* on Hiranyakashipu. The effect of this was that Hiranyakashipu arose with his body gleaming like burnished gold, and his health fully restored. Brahmaji said, “Ask for a boon, my son.” Hiranyakashipu asked that death should never come to him. Brahmaji told him that death was inevitable for every being that was born – यज्जन्म तद् अनित्यं ‘*yjjanma tad anityam*’ – since one is born, one must die. No one can escape death. यद् दृष्टं तन्नष्टम् ‘*Yad drishtam tannashatam*’ – what comes before our eyes will move away from our range of vision. “So, the boon you have asked for is impossible. You can not obtain immortality.”

Hiranyakashipu racked his brains for a way out, and said, “You can grant me this boon – that I will not die during the day, or at night. I will not die indoors, or outdoors. No creature made by you should kill me. I will not be killed by a bodiless power, or by a Devta, nor a Daitya, or by any weapon or curse.”

Hiranyakashipu thus sought to be immune from all possible causes of death which he could think of. But, you know very well that no matter how well thought out the laws may be, lawyers will always find a loophole and save their client. It is said that law makers deliberately leave some lacunae. Similarly, though Brahmaji granted the boon, some routes were left open for his death.

Hiranyakashipu was confident that he had outsmarted the laws and would now be indestructible. He drove away the Devtas from heaven and acquired the power to rule over the three worlds.

You were told earlier, that even those who are banished from Vaikunth are given great wealth and power by the Lord. Seeing their glory, one can use the kaimutak\* logic to imagine the incalculable glory of people living in Vaikunth.

There are descriptions, in the Shrimad Bhagwat, of mountains giving up precious gems, rivers flowing with sweet waters, and Devtas like the fire, sun, moon, wind and others being ruled by Hiranyakashipu the way they are



ruled by the Hiranyagarbha\*. So great was his power that even Brahmaji – who had given him the boon – would present himself every day, to accept worship from this demon.

Naradji told Yudhishthira, “I used to go with my Veena\*, with the Gandharvas\*, to eulogize Hiranyakashipu. He had such influence that if a person desired to see some spectacular vision, he had only to look up at the sky – नानाश्चर्यपदं नभः ‘*naanaashcharyapadam nabhah*’ - and visions would appear like a movie on a screen. Hiranyakashipu began to rule with unlimited power and glory. All the Devtas became his servants.

Hiranyakashipu had four sons, of which Prahlad was the youngest. However, his virtues were the greatest. He never became unhappy in adverse circumstances and always respected his elders. He had goodwill for all. He was like an ocean of nobility, a storehouse of good qualities, and fully engrossed in loving the Lord.

Despite being emperor of the three worlds, Hiranyakashipu did not arrange for Prahlad to be educated at home. He sent Prahlad to Shukracharya’s Gurukul\*. Prahlad did not come home often though the Gurukul was close to Hiranyakashipu’s palace. The two sons of Shukracharya, Shand and Amark, were his teachers. Prahlad lived as an ordinary student without any special facilities or privileges.

Think of the situation in the affluent families these days. Tutors and instructors are kept to teach children at home. The children control their teachers, dictating terms to them and threatening them with dismissal if they don’t comply. How can such children develop any respect for their teachers and how can they obtain a proper education?

One day, Hiranyakashipu placed Prahlad affectionately on his lap and said, “Tell me, what is the best thing in the world?” Prahlad replied, “Father, the people in this world are agitated because they are trapped in the whirlpool of ‘me’ and ‘mine’. So, the best thing in the world is to leave everything and surrender to the Lord.”

Hiranyakashipu burst out laughing. “It seems my enemy has placed a spy at school, to spoil my son,” he said. He warned the teachers and instructed them to keep a close watch on Prahlad in future. Prahlad was taken back to school.

Back at school, the tutors questioned Prahlad about who had taught him such things. “Tell us whether these are your own thoughts, or has somebody been teaching you?” they asked. Prahlad replied, “Only the deluded people differentiate between ‘ours’ and ‘others’. This faulty perception is removed only by the Grace of God. Just as a magnet attracts iron filings to itself, the Lord’s wish draws my mind irresistibly to Him.”

The two teachers were badly frightened. They were servants, and dependent upon the King. They coaxed, cajoled and threatened Prahlad. They began to teach him the sciences of Artha, Dharma and Kama.

When some time elapsed and Prahlad had learnt the four methods of dealings – sama\*, dama\*, danda\* and bheda\* - the Guru putras\* took Prahlad to his mother Kayadhu. She lovingly bathed and dressed him, in beautiful garments and ornaments. The Guru putras then too Prahlad to Hiranyakashipu. Prahlad prostrated at his father's feet, and Hiranyakashipu lifted him up with both arms and hugged him. He placed the child lovingly on his lap and blessed him. Hiranyakashipu was overcome with emotion, and tears of love fell from his eyes.

Hiranyakashipu asked Prahlad, "Tell me, my son, what is the best thing that you have learnt in all these days, from your Gurus?" Prahlad replied, "Father, I have learnt only nine things, and they are the ways of worshipping the Lord Vishnu:

श्रवणं कीर्तनं विष्णोः स्मरणं पादसेवनम्।

अर्चनं वन्दनं दास्यं सख्यमात्मनिवेदनम्॥ ७.५.२३.

*Sravanam keertanam vishnoh smaranam paadase`vanam,*

*Archanam vandanam daasyam sakhyamaatmanive`danam.*

7.5.23.

If these nine kinds of bhakti can be offered at the feet of the Lord, there is nothing better in this world than this."

Hearing this angered Hiranyakashipu so much that his lips began to tremble with rage. He fired the Guru putras. "You are contemptible! You did not bother about my wishes! What have you taught my son? You are doubtlessly conspiring against me!"

The terrified Guru putras replied, "King, we have not taught him all this. It is his own nature that he talks like that. Please do not blame us for this."

Hiranyakashipu then asked Prahlad where he had learnt all this, if not at school. "Father, the people in the world are only grinding dust and chewing the chewed. What can they teach anyone? No teaching can force the mind to move towards the Lord. It is only by His Grace that the mind gets attached to Him. A person whose mind touches the lotus feet of the Lord is liberated from the bonds of birth and death."

Hiranyakashipu was blinded by rage. He picked Prahlad up from his lap and threw him violently on the ground. "Take him away and kill him," he ordered the Daityas. "He is only fit to be killed."

At once huge, ferocious Daityas came up and began to attack Prahlad with trishuls\*. All their efforts were futile. Hiranyakashipu then had him trampled by an elephant, bitten by venomous snakes, thrown down from the mountain top, locked him in a dark cell, made him drink poison, stopped all his food and water, tried to burn him in a bonfire, had him buried under blocks of ice, and drown in the sea. Prahlad remained completely unharmed.

Then purohits were made to do an abhichar\*, which created a demoness called Kritya. She ran towards Prahlad to kill him, but was threatened by the Lord's Chakra\*, which had been appointed to protect Prahlad. She returned to the Brahmins who had undertaken the abhichar, and killed them.

Prahlad came running up, when he heard that the Brahmins had been killed. He prayed earnestly, 'If my heart has been totally free of ill will, please let these Brahmins return to life.' The power of Prahlad's equanimity brought the Brahmins back to life.

Hiranyakashipu was very worried to see and hear this. He began to think, "Prahlad definitely has some divine powers. Neither does he die, nor does he threaten anyone. There is no limit to his incredible ability."

Hiranyakashipu was engrossed in these thoughts, when Shand and Amark came to him. They said, "Sir, there is no need to worry. Prahlad is still just a child. We will take him with us again. It is possible that our father, Shukracharya, will return from his trip, and Prahlad will be cured by his influence. The intellect is often purified as a child grows and serves seniors." Hiranyakashipu accepted this suggestion and told them to tutor Prahlad so that he becomes fit to marry and rule. Shandamark\* took Prahlad to the Gurukula again, and began to teach him the sciences of Dharma, Artha and Kama.

None of this had the slightest affect on Prahladji. On the contrary, he influenced all the children of the daityas studying there. They would surround Prahlad and he would give sermons. The chanting of the Lord's name became the school routine. Prahlad said,

कौमार आचरेत्प्राज्ञो धर्मान् भागवतानिह ।

दुर्लभं मानुषं जन्म तदप्यध्रुवमर्थदम् ॥ ७.६.१.

*Kaumaara aachare`tpraagyo dharmaan bhaavataaniha,*

*Durlabham maanusham janma tadapyadhruvamarthadam.*

7.6.1.

"My friends, wise people should worship the Lord from the very childhood, because old people become incapable of bhakti. The only true success is to obtain the shelter of the Lord's feet in the present life. The Lord is the

Master of all creatures. He is the well wisher, lover and Atma of all. People do not understand what will benefit and what will harm, when they are young. They idle away their days in frivolous activities. When old age comes, they lack the strength to do anything. The short period in between is spent in fulfilling various desires. So, we should not waste any time. We should begin to do bhajan of the Lord.”

The Daitya children were amazed to hear Prahlad’s talk. “Brother Prahlad,” they asked, “you have been with us all the time. Then from where did you get this knowledge?”

Prahlad told them, ‘When Hiranyaksha was killed and my father, Hiranyakashipu went away to do tapasya, the Devtas seized the opportunity to attack the Daityas. The Asuras fled hither and thither in panic. The Devtas captured my mother, who was pregnant, and were taking her away, when they met Naradji. Naradji rescued my mother, and took her to his ashram. He gave her the boon of iccha prasuti\*, told her the Bhagwat Dharma, and told her to live there in peace till her husband returned. My mother forgot Naradji’s sermon on the Bhagwat Dharma, but I listened from inside her womb, and remember all I heard.”

The Daitya children were even more impressed when they heard this. The entire school followed Prahlad’s suggestions. Prahlad said –

कोऽतिप्रयासोऽसुरबालका हरेरुपासने स्वे हृदि छिद्रवत् सतः ।

स्वस्यात्मनः सख्युरशेषदेहिनां सामान्यतः किं विषयोपपादनैः ॥ ७.७.३८.

*Koatiprayaasoasurabaalakaa hare`rupaasane` sve` hridi chidravat satah,  
Svastyaatmanah sakhyurashe`shade`hinaam saamaanyatah kim  
vishayopapaadaanaih.*

7.7.38.

“My dear brothers, there is not the slightest difficulty in worshipping the Lord. He is seated in our hearts, just as there is an inner sky in our hearts. He is our Atma, our friend, our Master, and our All. There is nothing but Him. Then, where is the difficulty in worshipping Him?”

When the teachers saw that all the students were influenced by Prahlad, and had become devoted to the Lord, they felt very nervous. They went to Hiranyakashipu and reported everything to him.

Hiranyakashipu’s anger knew no bounds. He decided to kill Prahlad himself. He summoned the child and rebuked him harshly. ‘You fool! You have become absolutely audacious! Not only are you depraved, you want to spoil the other children of our clan! I will send you to Yamaraj immediately! Tell me – on whose strength did you ignore my orders?”

Prahlad folded his hands respectfully, and answered:

न केवलं में भवतश्च राजन् स वै बलं बलिनां चापरेषाम्।  
परेऽवरेऽमी स्थिरजङ्गमा ये ब्रह्मादयो येन वशं प्रणीताः॥ ७.८.८.

*Na ke`valan me` bhavatashcha raajan sa vai balam balinaam  
chaapare`shaam,  
Pare`avare`amee sthirajangamaa ye` brahmaadayo ye`na vasham  
praneetaah. 7.8.8.*

“King, the Lord controls all creation, from Brahma to the smallest blade of grass. The strength in all is His strength. There is no difference in the way He views the Brahmins, Kshatriyas\*, Vaishyas\*, Sudras\*, Devtas, Daityas, dharmaatmas\* and paapatmas\*. He is everybody’s Atma. He is my strength, He is your strength, and He is the strength of all.”

Prahlad’s words infuriated Hiranyakashipu further. “Where is your Ishwara?” he demanded. “Let me see Him! If He is everywhere, where is He in this pillar?” saying this, Hiranyakashipu struck the pillar with his fist.

The pillar broke with a thunderous crack. The Lord emerged from it in the form of Narasimha\*. In South India, they say that for the sake of His devotee, the Lord made wood His father! Hiranyakashipu began to battle with the half lion, half man form of the Lord. Ultimately, the Lord Narasimha caught hold of Hiranyakashipu and took him to the doorstep – neither indoors, nor outdoors. He placed the Daitya King on His knee – neither up nor down. It was twilight – neither day nor night. Apart from this, Lord Narasimha was neither a man nor an animal; nor had Brahmaji created Him. All Hiranyakashipu’s conditions were kept intact. The Lord Narasimha was beyond all factors. He ripped open Hiranyakashipu’s stomach with His claws, pulled out the intestines and wore them like a garland. The scene was unique and astounding. Still seething with anger, the Lord Narasimha went and sat on Hiranyakashipu’s throne.

The question crops up as to why the Lord Narasimha sat on Hiranyakashipu’s throne. He sat because it was on this throne that He wanted Prahlad to sit. How could Prahlad sit on a throne sullied by Hiranyakashipu? So, the Lord sat on it, and made the throne His prasaad\*.

All the Devtas eulogized the Lord one by one, thanking Him profusely for having killed Hiranyakashipu. Some were glad that they would now receive a portion of the Yagya offerings, and some were relieved that they would no longer need to serve Hiranyakashipu. Thus, the Devtas spoke of all the benefits they had accrued from Hiranyakashipu’s death.

Even after all this while, the Lord Narasimha's rage had not subsided. The Devtas asked Laxmiji\* to go and cool Him down, but she was too frightened of this ferocious form

साक्षाच्छ्रीः प्रेषिता देवैर्दृष्ट्वा तन्महद्भुतम्।

अदृष्टाश्रुतपूर्वत्वात् सा नोपेयाय शंकिता ॥ ७.९.२

*Saakshaachshreeh pre`shitaa de`vairdristvaa tanmahadadbhutam,  
Adrishtaashrutapoorvatvaat saa nope`yaaya shankitaa. 7.9.2.*

Laxmiji began to wonder whether it really was the Lord, or whether it was someone else who had taken on this fearsome form. She feared that this angry lion would eat her up, or tear her apart with His claws. She did not venture near the Narsimha Lord, despite all the appeals of the Devtas.

Then Brahmaji told Prahlad, "Son, just see – the Lord Narasimha is angry with your father. Go to Him, and calm Him down."

Prahladji went and prostrated at the Lord's feet. The Lord Narasimha immediately picked him up and placed him on His lap. His eyes became tender, and He began to lick Prahlad. Then He said, "Prahlad, you have such a tender body, you are so young, and yet these cruel Asuras tortured you mercilessly! My dear Prahlad, I delayed in coming. Forgive Me."

Prahlad stood up and began to praise the Lord. "Lord," he said, "I know Your nature. It is not what a person has – wealth, good lineage, beauty, ascetic strength, learning, personality, influence, power, strength, manliness, wisdom and luxury – even if a Brahmin has all these twelve qualities, You do not feel satisfied with him. However, if even the lowest of the lowly have devotion for You in their hearts, You are satisfied with them. You were satisfied with Gajendra. I am so pitiable, so lowly, bereft of virtues, not from a good lineage, and ignorant – yet I have received so much Grace from You!"

Prahlad said some startling things after this. The Shrimad Bhagwat contains many stutis\* about the Lord's nature, benevolence, qualities and Leela, spoken by great people like Bhishma, Brahma, Akrura, the Vedas, and others, but Prahlad's description of the essence of the Lord is outstanding.

Prahlad said, "Lord, when one gets the awareness that nothing exists but God, there remains no need to say anything."

आद्यन्तवन्त उरुगाय विदन्ति हि त्वामेवं विमृश्य सुधियो विरमन्ति शब्दात् ॥ ७.९.४९.

*Aadyantavanta urugaaya vidanti hi tvaame`vam vimarishya sudhiyo  
viramanti shabdaat.*

7.9.49.

You see, the social angle is different, the political angle is different, material and Vedic viewpoints are also different. The viewpoint pertaining to the Lord, however, is such that there is no competitiveness, no fault finding, no rejection and no ego. When one is filled with love for the Lord, one experiences that the body is serving Him in all; the sense organs all experience Him; the heart is filled with universal benevolence; thinking has discrimination; and the individual ego is dissolved. The Mahatmas thus united with the Paramatma, see the Lord everywhere and in every situation. They are never affected by negativity. Nor do they feel any need to say anything.

The Lord was pleased by Prahlad's stuti, and told him to ask for a boon. Prahlad said, "Lord, You tell me to ask for a boon. But – is my love for you motivated by a desire to obtain something? Do You have even the slightest wish to procure any service from me?"

अहं त्वकामस्त्वद्भक्तस्त्वं च स्वाम्यनपाश्रयः ।

नान्यथेहावयोरर्थो राजसेवकयोरिव ॥

यदि रासीश मे कामानां वरांस्त्वं वरदर्षभ ।

कामानां हृद्यसंरोहं भवतस्तु वृणे वरम् ॥ ७.१०.६-७

*Aham tvakaamastvadbhaktastvam cha svaamyapaashrayah,*

*Naanyathe`haavayorartho raajasevakayoriva.*

*Yadi raaseesha me`kaamaanaam varaanstvam varadarshabha,*

*Kaamaanaam hridyasanroham bhavatastu vrine`varam.*

7.10.6-7.

"Lord, I am your nishkam\* servant and You are my nishkam Master. Our relationship is not like the relationship of a King and his servants. Under the circumstances, there is no need for any boon. Still, my most generous Lord, if You desire to grant me anything I ask for, then grant that I never ever have any desire to ask for anything. Just as there is no desire in my heart today, let there never be any desire in my heart. Lord, if You feel it incumbent upon You to grant me a boon, then I ask for the good of my father, Hiranyakashipu, who always spoke ill of You. Let all parts of his body be benefited. Let all his sense organs be benefited, and let the five elements of his body be benefited, too. Let his subtle body be benefited, and his jeevatma\* be benefited." The Lord told Prahlad that because of him, all had benefited and received salvation.

The Lord Narasimha then carried out Prahlad's crowning ceremony. When Brahmaji came near, the Lord admonished him for granting boons unthinkingly. He warned Brahmaji to never repeat the mistake.

The entire creation was happy and prosperous, when Prahlad became the ruler. He was King of the Daityas. Indra was King of the Devtas, and humans ruled the earth. The next episode will come tomorrow.

Om Shantih! Shantih! Shantih!



## BHAGWATAMRIT

### Pravarchan VII.

#### (Skandha VII & VIII)

Yesterday I spoke of some episodes from the seventh Skandha. Of the fifteen chapters this contains, the first five are adhyatmik\*, the middle five are adhidaivik\*, and the last five are adhibhautik\*, meaning that they apply to our daily lives. The main text of the Gita gives five points, and these five chapters pertain to them.

अधिष्ठानं तथा कर्ता करणं च पृथग्विधम्।

विविधाधाश्च पृथक् चेष्टा दैवं चैवात्र पंचमम्॥ गी० १८.१४

*Aadhishtaanam tathaa kartaa karanam cha prithagvidhyam,*

*Vividhaashcha prithak che`shtaa daivam chaivaatra panchamam.*

*Gita, 18.14.*

Yudhishtira heard Naradji describe the stuti of Prahlad, and how the Lord frees us from all desires. Wanting to know more about Dharma, Yudhishtira placed some more questions. It is important to develop Dharma Shakti\* in our lives. Unless this is developed, a person is liable to say and do whatever he desires impulsively. Dharma is the ability to evaluate what ought to be spoken, and what should not be said; what should be done, and what should never be done. अनौचित्यादृतेनास्ति रसभङ्गस्य कारणम् “*Anauchityaadrute`naasti rasabhangasya kaaranam`* - when a person's speech is inappropriate and actions are improper, his life will cease to be joyful.

It is necessary, there, to evaluate and control our impulses, if we are to retain control over our sense organs and lives.

यथा हि मलिनैर्वस्त्रैः यत्र तत्रोपविश्यते।

एवं चलितवृत्तस्तु वृत्तशेषं न रक्षति॥

*Yathaa hi malinairvastraih yatra tatropavishyate`,*

*E`vam chalitavrittastu vritrashe`sham na rakshati.*

A person whose clothes are soiled will not be particular about the cleanliness of his chair, similarly, when a person gives up his ethics, he is no longer

bothered about how badly he behaves. Self control, discipline and codes of conduct are essential if our lives are to be filled with peace and pleasure; ruled by ethics rather than by urges!

The Varna Dharma\* is described first, followed by the Ashrama Dharma\*. Varna does not mean jaati\*. Jaati is grouped according to form, for example, the animals, birds, insects, humans and others.

The meaning of Varna is – वर्णनात् वर्णः *varnanaat varnah*’ - that which is proved as per the descriptions in the shastras. Similarly, Ashrama means the division of shrama\*. The syllable ‘aa’ in A+shrama is to indicate its parameters. There are four Ashramas – Brahmacharyashrama\*, Grihashtashrama\*, Vanaprasthashrama\* and Sanyashrama\*. Each Ashrama has its own Dharma, and the religious texts have defined the appropriate activities and attitudes for them.

The Varna and Ashrama Dharmas are given for worldly as well as other-worldly benefits. They benefit us in the present life and also after death. They also help us to understand the philosophy of spirituality – paramartha\*. All these factors have been considered in the outlining of these arrangements of Varna and Ashrama.

There are four Varnas – Brahmin\*, Kashtriya\*, Vaishya\* and Shudra\*. Each Varna has its designated duties. As described in the Gita, the Brahmin should practice shama-dama\*. The Kshatriya should have aishwarya\*, veerya\*, aastikya\*, etc. The duties of the Vaishya are farming, protecting cows, trading, etc. The Gita makes no mention of money lending, but according to the Bhagwat, it is not improper for a Vaishya to charge a reasonable interest in course of trading. Service to others is the main duty of a Shudra.

The duties of the different Varnas are graded in keeping with natural tendencies and aptitudes, which indicate which career is best for the person.

स्वभावगुणमार्गेण पुंसा मार्गो विभिद्यते।

*Svabhaavagunaarge`namaarge`na punsaam maargo vibhidyate`.*

The Dharma for women is unique. According to the Bhagwat, a woman should look after all kinds of work. She should be trustworthy, and love her husband with the kind of devotion given to the image of the Lord. Our natural love is always for our Atma. Love for others is generally in keeping with accepted norms. Religion has dictated that a wife’s love be bound to her husband, for the sake of decorum and restraint. It is said – या नारी हरिभावेन ‘yaa naaree haribhaave`na’ – the woman who worships the Lord in the form of her husband achieves salvation.

According to the Ashrama Dharma, a Brahmchari's primary duty is to serve his Guru, because he gains vidya\* by the Grace of his Guru. The Grihastha is expected to undertake all appropriate activities with an attitude of serving the Lord through them. The practice of sacrificing one's personal preferences, and simplifying the lifestyle, are the duties of the Vanaprastha. Giving up everything – 'tyaga' - is the duty of a Sanyasi. The Shrimad Bhagwat gives an extraordinary rider, which may be seen in the Mahabharata. It is not seen elsewhere. That is –

यस्व यल्लक्षणं प्रोक्तं पुंसो वर्णाभिव्यञ्जकम्।  
तदन्यत्रापि दृश्येत तत् तेनैव विनिर्दिशेत्॥ ७.११.३५.

*Yasya yallakshanam proktam punso varnaabhivyanjakam,*  
*Tadanyatraapi drishyate`tat te`naiva vinirdishe`t.*  
7.11.35.

This means that to finally decide which Varna a person actually belongs to, one should see his innate tendencies. His natural inclinations and aptitudes are the ultimate indications of his Varna, even if he is born in a family of another Varna. So, if a person of any other Varna has the inherent qualities of a Brahmin, he should be considered a Brahmin.

In defining Sanyas, it is said that there is a Vividisha Sanyas, and a Vidvat Sanyas. Vividisha Sanyas is when a person is completely detached from the world and has an intense desire to know the ultimate Knowledge. Vidvat Sanyas is the total renunciation after acquiring the ultimate knowledge. Veer Sanyas is a third kind, which entails walking into the Himalayas to die. Atur\* Sanyas is the fourth kind, granted to a person on his death bed. Thus, many kinds of Sanyas have been described.

While on this topic of renunciation, Naradji told Yudhishtira about the episode of the avadhoota\*. Prahladji's wanderings brought him to the banks of the river Cauvery, passing through the chain of mountains. He saw a robust, carefree person lying on the dusty ground. Prahladji went up to him and bowed respectfully. Then he said, "Sir, it seems you do no work, you just lie here, like a carefree elephant enjoying the river. To obtain pleasure, we need wealth, and wealth is obtained by effort. Wealth does not come to the lazy. उद्योगिनं पुरुषसिंहमुपैति लक्ष्मीः 'Udyoginam purushasim hamupaiti laxmih' - Laxmi comes to the one who works. It does not seem as though you do any work, or possess any wealth. How is it that you are so robust and carefree?"

No ordinary man can talk to a satpurush\* in this manner. He would fear the wrath of the man of Truth. However, godly men do not get angered, and nor does a woman devoted to her husband curse anyone. Sadhus\* never hurt

anyone – साधु ते होय न कारज हानी ‘*saadhu te` hoye` na kaaraja haani`*. Then, Prahladji was also a devotee of the Lord, and had His Grace.

The avadhoota was pleased with the questions placed by Prahladji. The avadhoota was none other than the Lord, in the form of Dattatreya. Dattatreya’s name comes in the first Skandha of the Bhagwat. It is stated that the Lord took on the form of Dattatreya and gave sermons on tattvagnan to Prahlad and others.

The avadhoota said, “Prahlad, I am pleased to hear your question – सम्भावनीयोहि भवान् *sambhaavaneeyohi bhavaan`* - I shall show you deference, since your heart is filled with so much devotion for the Lord.”

Remember one thing. What would you do, if you wanted to clean your clothes? Suppose you put them into a fire – would they be cleaned or would they be burnt? They would be burnt. So, to clean our clothes, we have to immerse them in hot water, and dry them, and then iron them to remove the creases. So, to purify our Antahkaran\*, we cannot pour gnanagni\* directly into it. The way to purify the Antahkaran is that the iron of Bhakti should be heated by the gnanagni, and then put to practical use. When knowledge comes into our lives, this way, it succeeds in purifying our mind and character.

The avadhoota said, “Brother Prahlad, at times I sleep on the ground, and at times I sleep in a palace. Sometimes I wear good clothes and sometimes I wear tattered rags. One day I may eat dry, unappetizing food, and one day, a sumptuous meal. I rejoice in whatever I get. I am completely indifferent to whether people recognize me or not, insult me or show respect. मानापमानयोस्तुल्यम् ‘*Maanapamaanayostulyam`* - respect and insult are all the same for me. I am aware that nothing exists but the Brahman. The whole prapancha\* appears to be real only because our ego is attached to this petty body. The world seems real because we believe the body to be real. We will realize that the whole world is a mirage only when we see the body and mind – and the world they exist in – as being nothing more than an illusion based upon the substratum of its own non-existence. An item which shimmers like a lake in the desert is not a reality. Because of this, I do not believe in the existence of anything in the world. I am established in an unbroken state of bliss.”

Prahlad was delighted with this answer from the avadhoota. He bowed down once again, and went on his way.

Listening to this episode, Yudhishthira began to wonder whether a Grihastha could attain such a state of bliss. He asked Naradji, “Sir, can a householder attain such a lofty state?”

गृहस्थ एतां पदवीं विधिना येन चांजसा ।

याति देवऋषे ब्रूहि मादृशो गृहमूढधीः ॥ ७.१४.१

*Grihasta e`taam padavim vidhinaa ye`na chaanjasaa,*

*Yati de`varishe` broohi maadrisho grihamoodhadheeh.*

7.14.1.

Naradji replied, “A householder should carry out his assigned duties. None of the Ashramas, Varnas, work or attitudes is inferior, if they are undertaken as a worship of the Lord. Before you do anything, reflect upon your reasons for doing what you wish to do. It is very dangerous to undertake anything without considering the probable consequences. A man must evaluate the consequences of each action, and embark upon them only after he has weighed all the possible effects.

A householder should keep the company of people who love the Lord. He should be free of worldly attachments and aversions, and strive to have an experience of the Lord. He should also worship – उपासीत महामुनीन् ‘upaaseeta mahaamuneen’ - the mahamunis\*, and follow the excellent inspirations they give. Worldly items are transient. Obtaining them will not bring you to the state you seek. You should, therefore, have a filial affection for all creatures – even worms, moths, lice, bed bugs, mosquitoes and the like.”

मृगोष्ट्रखरमकार्खिसरीसृपखगमक्षिकाः ।

आत्मनः पुत्रवत् पश्येत्तैरेषामन्तरं कियत् ॥ ७.१४.९

*Mrigoshttrakharamarkaarkhu – sareesriphagamakshikaah,*

*Aatmanah putravat pashye`ttaire`shaamantaram kiyat.*

7.14.9.

The Bhagwat says things which seem frightening to householders. However, the person who desires the blissful freedom of an avadhoota, will have to develop certain changes in his attitude. The shloka\* just prior to the one I have just spoken, is:

यावद् भ्रियेत जठरं तावत् स्वत्वं हि देहिनाम् ।

अधिकं योऽभिमन्येत स स्तेनो दण्डमर्हति ॥ ७.१४.८

*Yavadbhriye`ta jatharam taavat svatvam hi de`hinaam,*

*Adhikam yoabhimanye`t sa ste`no dandamarhati*

7.14.8.

Naradji said “Yudhishtira, the only food which really belongs to you is the food which suffices to fill your stomach. Anyone who feels that he is the owner of anything more, is a thief, liable for punishment.”

A householder will not be troubled overmuch by loss and profit if he cultivates this kind of an attitude. Otherwise wealth is a cause of suffering. Earning is difficult, one is sad if wealth is stolen, or taken away by relatives. It will continue to be a source of sorrow for as long as you consider that it belongs to you. That is why the great thinkers have advised us to remain within ethical parameters.

You heard what the Bhagwat has to say about wealth. Now see what the Manusmriti\* says:

आदाननित्याच्चादातुराहरेदप्रयच्छतः ।

तथा यशोऽस्य प्रथते धर्मश्चैव प्रवर्तते ॥

*Aadaananityaachchaadaaturaahare`daprayacchatah,*  
*Tathaa yashoasya prathate`dharmashchaiva pravartate`.*

This means that if a person accumulates wealth and never uses it to help anyone, then the Government has the moral right to take it away from him, and use it to help the needy. A King will be praised for doing this, and his Dharma will increase.

Medhatithi has written a commentary upon this verse, which says – सार्ववर्णिकोऽयम् ‘*saarvavarnikoayam*’ – that even if it is a Brahmin who does this, the wealth should be taken away. The Lord created wealth for the welfare of the people. It was not created to be buried underground, or hidden away. It is to be utilized for the welfare of all.

The Shrimad Bhagwat has another exceptional message, which may not be very pleasing to the rigidly orthodox. It states that a householder should serve a guest wholeheartedly.

आश्वाघान्तेऽवसायिभ्यः कामान्संविभजेद् यथा ।

अप्येकामात्मनो दारां नृणां स्वत्वग्रहो यतः ॥

जह्याद्यदर्थे स्वप्राणान्हन्याद् वा पितरं गुरुम् ।

तस्यां स्वत्वं स्त्रियां जह्याद् यस्तेन ह्यजितो जितः ॥ ७.१४.११-१२

*Aashvaadhaante`avasaayibhyah kaamaansanvibhaje`d yathaa,*  
*Apye`kaamaatmano daaraam nrinaam svatvagraho yatah.*  
*Jahyaadyarthe`svapraanaanhanyaad vaa pitaram gurum,*  
*Tasyaam svatvam striyaam jahyaad yaste`na hyajito jitah.*

7.14.11-12.

Naradji indicates that a family man should also ask his wife and children to serve the guest. He should not be too attached to his wife. If a householder can lead a life of detachment and service, he can win over the Lord.

Naradji emphasized the need for a householder to carry out his duties. “These include doing sharddha\* for the departed relatives. Kaimutik\* logic establishes that since a son is to revere his elders even after they die, it is natural that he should be expected to serve them when alive. A son shows his gratitude for his parents, even after having inheriting their wealth, by doing nothing to sully their reputation. Doing shraddha purifies the mind and helps also, to strengthen belief in life after death.

Other duties of a householder include arranging for the education of Brahmins and seeing to it that all their needs are met. This is an important aspect of a householder’s duties, since it helps to maintain the continuity of our culture. Householders should also go on pilgrimages and obtain the company of godly people. They should celebrate special occasions, by worshipping the idol of the Lord. While one can worship the Lord in any form, the human body is a special temple – तासां मे पौरुषी प्रिया ‘*taasaam me` paurushee priyaa*’. The human body is dear to the Lord, and He abides in every heart. Social service is, therefore, a greater form of worship than ritual worship. Social service should be free from all differences of caste, Varna, religious sect, women, men, etc. The heart should be free of partiality or favoritism, physical violence should be avoided, and – as far as possible – peace and goodwill should be spread. There is no greater worship of the Lord than this.

“Yudhishtira, before the Treta Yuga\*, the Lord was worshipped in humans. The people’s faith grew weak and they became critical of others. They would worship, but they would also criticize. The Mahatmas then thought over the matter and came to the conclusion that it is best that people worship an image, which they can always revere. However, even the worship of the idol will never bear fruit if people simultaneously hold a hatred for fellow beings.”

उपासत उपास्तापि नार्थदा पुरुषद्विषाम्। ७.१४.४०

*Upaasata upaastaapi naarthadaa purushadvishaam.*

7.14.40.

Naradji continued, “Yudhishtira, this whole creation is the shadow of the Paramatma. It is just like the shadow of a tree. The shadow does not have a

separate identity. It lengthens in the mornings and evening, and shortens at midday, and disappears if no one stands in the sun. It is not possible for the shadow to exist without the man, since it is not separate from the man. However, inspite of its being inseparable, from the person it belongs to, the shadow saves others from the hot sun. It remains attached to its origin even while having a separate affect. In the same way, the shadow of this world is not separate from the Lord.

भावाद्वैतं क्रियाद्वैतं द्रव्याद्वैतं तथाऽऽत्मनः ।

वर्तयस्वानुभूत्येह त्रीन्स्वप्नान्धुनुते मुनिः ॥ ७.१५.६२.

*Bhaavaadvaitam kriyaadvaitam dravyaadvaitam tathaatmanah,  
Vartayasvaanubhootyeha treensvapnaandhunute` munih.  
7.15.62.*

There are three kinds of advaita\*. Bhavadvaita\*, kriyadvaita\*, and dravyadvaita\*. Bhavadvaita is when a person cultivates goodwill for all creatures. When all one's actions are offered up to the Lord, it is called Kriyadvaita, and dravyadvaita is when one feels that everything belongs to the Lord. अहं एतं न 'Aham e`tam na' – "this is not me, and this is not mine." Then, "Whose is it?" "The whole world belongs to him, of whom I am just a particle."

Naradji explained what is meant by Dharmabhas\*. He said that it is Dharmabhas, when guidance is being given to some other person, and we begin to practice it ourselves. It is cheating to deliberately mislead anybody, and it is vidharma\* to hinder anybody's worship – धर्मबाधो विधर्मः स्यात् 'dharmabaadho vidharmah syaat.' If we undertake an anushthaan for the sake of hindering another person's worship, it becomes an irreligious action. Then Naradji spoke about the subtleties of Dharma, Dharmabhas, vidharma, ethics, etc. to Yudhishtira. He told him how he (Naradji) was a Gandharva in his past life. "I had all the facilities for sensual pleasures, plenty of wealth, and much luxury," he said. "However, I misbehaved with a Mahatma, and became a Shudra as a result of his curse. As a Shudra, however, I was fortunate to get the proximity of Mahatmas and serve them. I did bhajan. As a result of bhajan, the Lord made me His attendant. Now, I play the veena\* and wander where I please.

Quarrelling in the name of religion – so common today – is never for basic Dharma. People quarrel because they wish to impose the strictures of their country, time, teacher, etc. Just as the matter in all is one, the basic precepts of religions are common for mankind. They contain no contentious issues.



Ultimately, Naradji told Yudhishtira earnestly, how fortunate they were, that the Lord stayed with them in a human form. “Great sages come to your house, to get a glimpse of the Lord, and you get to meet these great devotees! He, whose birth and actions cannot be described adequately by even Shankar and Brahmaji and others, stays in your house as a relative. How compassionate and gracious He is!”

Naradji departed when he had answered all Yudhishtira’s questions. Shri Shukadevji Maharaj concluded the seventh Skandha, and used Raja Parikshit’s question to embark on the eighth Skandha. This is called the Saddharma Skandha. It contains twenty four chapters. The first chapter described the Manvantaras\*. Three chapters after this give the story of the elephant and the crocodile. The next ten chapters describe the facilities and jewels the Lord has given us. The following nine chapters describe the ways in which men worship the Lord. The last chapter explains how the philosophy of the Vedas is established as being accurate and authentic.

With regard to the description of the Manvantaras, I wish to remind you of the fifth Skandha, and the description it contains of how – when we begin to seek the end of the four directions, and above and below, and attempt to reach an understanding of the Paramatma-tattva\* which upholds everything – then we get a glimmer of how all pervading the Lord is. In the same way, when we begin to try and measure time, we realize that the Kaliyuga\* is about four and a half million years. The Dvapara Yuga\* is twice as long. Treta is three times as long as Dvapara and Satya Yuga is four times the length of Treta. Combining all four, we get a chaturyugi\*. Seventy one chaturyugis make a Manvantara. Next comes a Kalpa, then Mahakalpa, and the Maha Pralay\*. These calculations are given to explain that the Lord is unaffected by Time and Space, and is all-pervading.

At the beginning of the eighth Skandha, Shri Shukadevji answered Raja Parikshit by telling him that Swayambhuva Manu told his sons to rule the world. He then went off, with his wife Shatroopa, into the forest, and began to do japa. His mantra was:

आत्मावास्यमिदं विश्वं यत् किञ्चिज्जगत्यां जगत्।

तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथा मा गुधः कस्यस्विद्धनम्॥ ८.१.१०

*Aatmaavaasyamidam vishvam yat kinchijjagatyaam jagat,  
Te`na tyakte`na bhunjeethaa ma gridhah kasyasviddhanam.  
8.1.10.*

The same mantra is given in the Upanishad. ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वम् ‘*Ishavasyamidam sarvan*’ comes in the Upanishad, and आत्मावास्यमिदं विश्वम् ‘*aatmaavaasyamidam vishvam*’ comes in the Bhagwat. The rest is identical. This means – fill the universe with your Atma. All the others feel the same kind of joy and sorrow as you do.

When Manuji was engrossed in chanting, the Asuras came with the intention of killing him. The Lord, however, manifested and killed them. The demonic tendency of the demons was destroyed, and Manu – the representative of humane values – was saved.

Shri Shukadevji mentioned the second, Svaarchish Manu, the third, Uttam Manu, and the fourth, Tapas Manu, and then their descendents.

He then spoke of Gajendra\*, and how he was a King named Indradyumna, in his past life.

It was Indradyumana’s practice to worship the Lord. Once, when he was seated in worship, the most enlightened Mahatma Agastya came to visit him. He sent a servant, who told the Mahatma to wait outside until the King had completed his pooja\*. Agastya waited for the King to be free, and then entered. However, the King did not extend the courtesy of arising and bowing down to welcome the Mahatma. Agastyaji gave him a curse, saying, “Since you behave like an imperious elephant, become one.”

Even as an elephant, the King had all the creature comforts, since he had worshipped the Lord. There were great lakes, plenty of fruits and vegetation of all kinds, etc. he had many female elephants, and their calves, and the calves of his sons. One day, he went into a lake. A crocodile, who lived there, caught his foot.

A man’s arrogance is always broken, sooner or later. It breaks when a graha\* enters his life. A person who has duragraha\* is humbled. Vinay\* protects self respect, whereas arrogance invites insult. It is a sign of intelligence when a person accepts the reality. When an obstinate person refuses to accept reality, and insists upon having his way – disregarding good advice – his life will be filled with wrong actions. The actual graha in people’s lives is the duragraha and vighraha\*. Other grahas are in the sky, but the grahas of duragraha and vighrahas stay in the mental sky. The story of Gajendra-graha is, therefore, particularly significant for people in the world. Not all Gajendra’s strength could save him from the jaws of the graha. The male and female elephants of his herd all came to his aid, twining their trunks round his legs and tail, trying to pull him back, without success.

When Gajendra realized that he was about to drown, the recollection of his past life flashed into his mind, because the Lord’s worship is never in vain. He lifted a lotus with his trunk, and raised it up to the Lord, with a prayer.

निषेधशेषो जयतादशेषः ‘*Nishe`dhashe`sho jayaataadashe`shah`*’ – everything can be denied, except the Paramatma. Had the Paramatma been another, He would not be with us when we sleep, go into a Samadhi, nor been anywhere at all. He would have been negated. It is possible for us to say, “Is not” for another, because we are not conscious of them while we sleep or meditate. Nor are we conscious of their existence when we are unconscious; and certainly not at the time of dissolution. For any other thing, we can ask the question, “If he exists, why am I not able to experience him?” In our own pratyak chaitanya\*, the Atmadev\* is nothing separate or different from the Parabrahma Paramatma\*. So, it is not possible for anyone alive to declare that they do not exist.

When Gajendra offered up the lotus, and praised the Lord, saying, “O Govind! O Govind! Protect me!” neither Brahmaji nor Shankarji came. Nor did the Lord Vishnu appear. The form that appeared was the four-armed form of the Lord which Gajendra had worshipped mentally.

It is said that the Lord’s attendant Vishvaksena, placed His sandals before the Lord, when He stood up to go. The Lord stepped on them so hard, that they broke. He pushed away His mount Garuda hastily. The Lord heard “Go” in Vaikuntha\* and “vind” on earth, as He descended at the lake.

The Lord said, “So what if it is a crocodile? He has caught the foot of My devotee. So, first of all I will liberate the devotee of My devotee. After that, I will liberate My devotee.” He brought Gajendra out, and gave liberation to the crocodile.

This was no ordinary crocodile. He had been a Gandharva in his past life, and had once mocked an ugly Mahatma by pulling his leg. The Mahatma had given him a curse, saying he would become a crocodile. Thus, both King Indradyumna and the Gandharva had been guilty of misbehaving with Mahatmas, and had been turned into Gajendra and the crocodile respectively.

The Lord liberated both, the one who was caught and the one who caught, were freed from curses. The nature of the Lord is completely free of differentiation of acquirements - non-acquirements, receiver – non-receiver, etc. So, He liberated both the elephant and the crocodile.

The next story is about Durvasaji finding a garland of fresh lotus flowers, and wanting to bestow it on Indra. By chance, Indra came down the same road, riding his elephant, Airavat. Durvasa garlanded Indra, as planned. Indra, however, did not realize the importance of this garland – or perhaps he was too intoxicated with his own power and position to bother. He took off the garland, and put it round the head of Airavat, who promptly tore it off with his trunk and trampled upon it. All this happened in a flash, while

Durvasa watched. Durvasa felt insulted. “You have insulted the sanctified garland I bestowed upon you, so become Laxmirahit\* - निःश्रीको भवान् ‘*nihshreeko bhavaan*’.”

As a result of this curse, Indra lost his throne. The world was bereft of beauty and prosperity, and Bali became King of heaven! All the Devtas went to Brahmaji and Shankarji. Then they all got together and did stuti of the Lord.

You will note that all the stutis have this in common, that they say, “Lord, You are the earth, water, fire, wind, sky, Sun and Moon, and You are the mana\*, buddhi\*, chitta\* and ahankar\*. Brahma, Shiva and the others said a similar stuti. The Lord manifested in His four-armed form. Brahma and Shankar could see the Lord, but the eyes of the Devtas were too dazzled to see Him. They just eulogized Him and placed their problem.

The Lord said, “Brahmaji, Shankarji and Devtas – it is not possible that I favor you upon every occasion. It is not to anybody’s credit if they need outside help to deal with their enemy. At present, Bali is well established in Dharma. Even Ishwara cannot put aside a person who treads the path of righteousness. So, it is only proper that you go to Bali, unarmed, and seek to have a Treaty with him – सन्धिविधीयताम् ‘*sandhirvidheeyataam*’. If our enemy is very strong, it is wise to have a Treaty. Agree with whatever the Asuras say, for the time being. Peaceful negotiation can achieve everything, but getting angry achieves nothing.” The Lord then taught them all the methods of making a Treaty.

When the Asuras saw the Devtas approach unarmed, their first impulse was to imprison them. Bali forbade them, saying it would tarnish his reputation, and they were quiet.

The Devtas reached Bali and discussed the treaty with him. It was decided that the ksheer sagar\* should be jointly churned, and the amrit\* which would emerge, be shared by all. Everyone would become immortal after drinking it.

They decided to use the Mandarachala mountain as the mathani\*, and the serpent Vasuki, as the neti\* for churning it. However, the Devtas and the Daityas found that their combined strength was insufficient to shift the mountain. They did manage to raise it once, but it fell again, causing injury to the limbs of the Devtas and Daityas.

The ksheer sagar is the sea of sattvaguna\*. It is necessary that the Daivi\* as well as the Asuri\* tendencies are turned towards the Truth, before the manthan\* can be undertaken. Only then can the highest fruit – the elixir – be procured.

The Devtas and Daityas remembered the Lord, when all their efforts to shift the mountain failed. He came, seated on the Garuda, and placed the Mandarachala on the Garuda's wings.

See what Manuji Maharaj says about Garudaji. He says that all creations and conditions are caused by the words of the Vedas. The words of the Vedas are very powerful, and Garudaji is their personification. The Lord cannot be reached by direct vision. Nor can He be reached by hypothesis. He is in no way affected by logic or intangibility. Comparison fails as far as the Lord is concerned, and traditional theories cannot reach Him either. The Lord is disclosed only through words. It is 'the word' which brings enlightenment.

The Lord placed the Mandarachala on the wings of the word, manifested as Garuda, and came to the milky ocean. He pushed the mountain into the sea, but it would keep sinking and rising. So the Lord displayed His supportive power by taking on the form of a giant tortoise, and supporting the Mandarachala on His back. This was the Kachap Avatar\*. In another form, He held the mountain firmly upon the back of the tortoise. Then they wrapped Vasuki round the mountain, because Vasuki had agreed to this, on condition of getting his share of the amrit.

The Devtas went towards Vasuki's head, and the Daityas went towards the tail, to start the churning. Then, the Daityas felt that it was insulting to hold the tail, and said, "We are the elder brothers. We will not hold the tail." The Devtas were unwilling to change. The Lord interceded, telling both sides not to permit pettiness to divert them from the main purpose. "You should understand the importance of the goal, and stop quibbling," He said.

The Lord ordered the Devtas to come towards the tail and allow the Daityas to hold the head. The Devtas obeyed. When the manthan started, they understood why the Lord had told them to move. Fumes of poison emerged from Vasuki's mouth, causing great discomfort to the Daityas. The Devtas, however, were refreshed by showers caused by the condensation of Vasuki's gusts of hot breath.

Now, listen attentively – the Lord is seated, in the form of a tortoise, supporting the Mandarachala on His back. He is standing, in another form, on top, holding the mountain down firmly. He is in all the Devtas and Daityas, in the form of their strength. Despite this, when the churning was inadequate, He took on yet another form. He caught hold of Vasuki's tail with one hand, and head with the other hand. We can only imagine how vast the Lord is. Actually, for one who's naval holds the sky, nothing can be considered impossible. The description of His ornaments is also given to indicate that He is all pervading. The Brahmalo\* is in His crown, and the

earth is in His waist, and the nether lands are in His feet. Thus, the Lord's form is endless.

Some obstacles were bound to arise, when the manthan started. Obstacles come up whenever anyone undertakes any good work – श्रेयांसि बहुविघ्नानि 'shre`yaansi bahuvighnaani'. This happens to show us that success comes to those who persevere. When someone lacks the courage to continue in the face of difficulties, success begins to think, "What is the use of going to someone who gives up so easily?" People with worthy qualities do not give up their goal so easily!

प्रारभ्य चोत्तमजना न परित्यजन्ति। नी० श० २७

*Praarabhya chottamajanaa na parityajanti'.*

*Neeti Shatra. 27.*

So, what was the obstacle which arose when the churning began? It was deadly venom. It is impossible to cure certain diseases without the use of venom. विषस्य विषमौषधम् 'Vishasya vishamaushadham' – poison is used as an oshadhi\* for a number of diseases. What is an oshadhi? ओषति दोषान् धत्ते गुणान् इति ओषधिः 'Oshati doshaan dhatte' gunaan iti oshadhih' - that, which removes faults in our lives, and induces goodness, that which supplies what we need, is called "oshadhi". It does three things – firstly, it removes the cause of the disease; secondly, it provides nourishment; and thirdly, it gives us what we lack. Venom is, therefore, a very valuable item.

The Devtas and Daityas were frightened when the poison emerged. They did not know what would happen. They feared that the poison would burn the world and destroy it.

The Lord Vishnu was busy with the manthan, but the Lord Shankar was seated in meditation. He was unconcerned with the Devtas and the Daityas. Lord Vishnu suggested that Shankarji be involved in this activity. The Devtas and Daityas went to Shankarji and prayed, "You are the Lord of Pralay\*, but it is not yet the time for dissolution. This deadly poison has emerged before its time. Please do not allow the world to be destroyed now. Please save us all from this fearsome venom."

Shankarji agreed to help them. He spoke to his wife, Gauriji, saying, "Devi\*, our people are in peril. It is our duty to remove the cause of their fear."

Gauriji complimented Shankarji for his kindness, and said, "Those who have the nature of a Sadhu\*, Mahatma or Satpurush\*, invariably wish to remove the suffering of others, by taking it upon themselves. It is the highest

worship of the Amalatma Purush\* to save others from suffering by taking it upon one's self."

तप्यन्ते लोकतापेन साधवः प्रायशो जनाः ।

परमाराधनं तद्धि पुरुषस्याखिलात्मनः ॥ ८.७.४४.

*Tapyante`lokataape`na saadhavah praayasho janaah,  
Paramaaraadhanam taddhi purushasyaakhilaatmanah.  
8.7.44.*

Encouraged by Gauriji's approval, Shankarji drank the deadly poison. The Mahatmas say that Shankarji gathered up all the venom, but did not allow it to linger on his tongue, because that is where the Lord's name is kept. If the name of the Lord and poison were kept together, people would lose faith in the name. Neither did Shankarji let the poison reach his heart, because the form of the Lord is seated in his heart. So, Shankarji placed the venom in his throat, deciding to bring it up again, and use it for dissolution, when the time was right. "Then, I need not use my powers of destruction," he thought.

Shankarji's neck turned blue with the poison, and this became a decoration – 'taccha shambhorvibhooshanam'. If one gets a scar or a stain in the course of helping others, even that mark becomes a decoration.

The second item to emerge from the ocean was the gomata\*, which the Brahmins received. The Daityas asked for Uchchaishrava, the horse which emerged next, and it was given to them. The Devtas were given Airavat, the elephant which emerged after Uchchaishrava.

While all this was happening, the Lord told Kaustubh\*, "You have always clung to Me. Now, go for a sojourn." It entered the ocean, and emerged as Padmarag\* - पद्मरागो महोदधे: 'padmaraago mahodadhe`h' – and attached itself to the Lord again.

The Kaustubh – or Padmarag – has no hole pierced in it. Nor does it need to be strung. How can anything, which clings to the Lord's chest, be less than perfect, and whole? The effect of being close to the Lord is to be totally free from bondage.

After this, the Kalpataru\* emerged, and was given to the Devtas. The Apsaras who came next, were also received by the Devtas. Then Laxmi emerged. The whole world was filled with goodness, as soon as she emerged. It is through Her that the Lord's Grace is given. So, as soon as she emerged, all the Devtas and Daityas were eager to see Her. Laxmi pacified them all.

It is said, that at the time of the samudra manthan\*, Laxmiji told the Lord, "We have always been together, since time immemorial. I am Your wife,

Laxmi, and You are my husband, Narayana. Our names are taken jointly, as Laxminarayana. However, my friends wish to know when we celebrate our wedding anniversary. Neither You, nor I, can give them an answer.”

The Lord Narayana replied, “Devi, we have an excellent opportunity today. Make the ocean your father, and emerge as his daughter, and we will get married today. People will be able to see the happy occasion of our wedding.”

Laxmiji agreed, and emerged from the ocean. She started a Leela of having a swayamvara\*. Everybody was made to sit in a row. Laxmiji said that she would marry the one who did not desire her. “People who want me will cease to value me, once they have me,” She said. “He who desires me only to fulfill his wishes, will ultimately destroy me. Only the man, who wants me without worldly desire, will continue to cherish me.”

Laxmiji started finding fault with the candidates. “This one has a lot of knowledge, but is very greedy.” “This one does not keep good company.” “This one is too old.” “This one has a terrible temper,” and so on. She kept rejecting them all, one by one. Then she glanced at the sea, and saw someone sleeping there. Enquiries revealed that it was the blue hued Narayana, who reposes in the ocean of sattvaguna\*, covered by a golden garment, as he sleeps upon the white, milky ocean. “He did not attend the swayamvara because He has no desire to get married,” She was told. “He is resting.”

Laxmiji declared that this was the one she would wed. She left everybody, and went to Him with the Varmala\*. The Lord opened His eyes. His eyes met hers. They had conspired for this, and Laxmiji garlanded the Lord, and He placed her on His chest. The others could only watch helplessly.

The one who emerged next was Dhanvantari. He is a gem in the form of a vaidya\*. The Ayurveda\* in his mouth is also a gem, and so is the Amrit Kalash\* in his hand. As soon as Dhanvantari emerged, holding the Amrit Kalash, the Daityas snatched it away. Since there is no unity among Daityas, they began to quarrel among themselves.

The Devtas were disheartened to see this. The Lord took on the form of Mohini\*, which enchanted both the Devtas and the Daityas. The Daityas appealed to her, “Deviji, we brothers are quarreling among ourselves for the elixir. Please intercede and settle the dispute. We agree to abide by whatever you decide.”

Mohini said, “You do not know my background, my caste, my parentage, or my character. Nobody trusts an unknown harlot. Why do you trust me?”

The Daityas replied that they did not care what she was; they would obey her, regardless of any consequence.



Mohini replied, “Then you will have to follow whatever I say. Nothing is to be done without my permission.”

They Daityas accepted her condition. Mohini told them to bathe, and do the Sandhya Vandan\*, chant the Gayatri mantra, and sit on a grass mat generally used for rituals of worship.

Even the Daityas who had not received the yagyopaveeta behaved as though they were initiated. They bathed, did the rituals as directed by Mohini, and sat in a row. The Devtas sat in a row opposite the Daityas.

Mohini reconfirmed their willingness to accept her verdict. Everybody confirmed in one voice. Mohini started on the side of the Devtas. She would smile enchantingly at the Daityas, while giving Amrit to the Devtas, indicating that she would soon be with them.

A Daitya named Rahu disguised himself, and sat down between Surya (the sun) and Chandra (the moon), but was soon caught out. The Lord – still in the form of Mohini – cut off his head with His Chakra (discus). Rahu’s body was divided into two. One remained Rahu, and the other became Ketu.

The Daityas realized that Mohini had been treacherous. They picked up their weapons and rushed to kill her. Mohini shed her wig and garments, and wiped off her makeup. The Narayana (who had become Mohini) vanished from view.

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj said, “Parikshit, even though the Daityas and the Devtas had put in an equal effort, it was the Devtas who received the Amrit, because they were guided by the Lord, and had His Grace and support. The Daityas – who are always opposed to the Lord – were deprived of it. The fact is that the side which has the Lord is the side of Truth, and the side away from the Lord is the side of nescience. It is Bhakti which turns us towards the Lord – who is Satswaroop – the existence, Chitswaroop – the consciousness, and Anandswaroop- bliss incarnate. When we turn towards the Lord, it benefits us in this world as well as in the next.

A fierce battle raged between the Devtas and Daityas, as soon as the Lord vanished. Warriors from both sides used different animals and birds as their mounts – some even used flies and mosquitoes – during the battle. This Devasura sangram, as this battle is called, is remembered even today. All the wars which have taken place on earth have a shadow of the war between godly and demonic forces.

The war was so terrible that even the Devtas who had drunk Amrit, began to die. The Shrimad Bhagwat describes this with absolute clarity. The question arose, as to why the Devtas died; they should have become immortal after drinking the Amrit. The answer is that the efficacy of Amrit was blocked by the dishonesty of the Devtas. The Amrit became impotent because the

Daityas did not receive their fair share. So, the Amrit's power of immortality did not work for the Devtas.

The frightened Devtas began to worship the Lord. He appeared before them. The Lord had not given Amrit to the Daityas because that would have been like nurturing a snake. Even milk given to a snake turns into poison. The Amrit started to take effect as soon as the Lord appeared on the side of the Devtas.

The Lord killed many Asuras with His Chakra. Indra, encouraged by the Lord, lifted up his Vajra and killed many demons. A celestial voice told Indra how to kill the Asuras who were very powerful. Indra told Bali, "Come before me and show how much valor you have."

Bali replied, "Indra, victory and defeat are worldly norms – they keep coming in life. Why talk of them while we face each other in battle? You display your valor, and I will display mine."

संग्रामे वर्तमानानां काल चोदितकर्मणाम्।

कीर्तिर्जयोऽजयो मृत्युः सर्वेषां स्युरनुक्रमात्॥ ८.११.७.

*Sangraame`vartamaanaanaam kaala choditakarmanaam,*

*Keertirjayoajayo mrityuh sarve`shaam syuranukramaat.*

8.11.7.

In the terrible battle which ensued, Indra shot down Bali's air plane with his vajra. Bali fell, unconscious, to the ground. The Daityas picked up his body and took it to Shukracharya. The Devtas began to kill the remaining Daityas, who were completely routed.

Just then Naradji – sent by Brahmaji – arrived at the scene of the battle. He said, "Deltas, the Daityas and you have both always existed in the world. This battle has been won by you. It is not proper that you destroy the seed of the Daityas completely. Your virtues will be known only if Daityas exist, because people will be able to compare, and realize your superiority."

Naradji is Devarshi\*. He is the purohit of the Devtas, so the Devtas took his advice, and stopped killing the Daityas. They regained the rule of Heaven, and were happy once again.

The Devtas prayed to the Lord Vishnu again, since they still feared the Daityas. "Lord, You have given us victory, but what will happen if the Daityas go to Shankarji and he grants them a boon, and supports them against us?" The Lord told them not to worry.

After reassuring the Devtas, the Lord Vishnu focused upon Shankarji, and they had a telepathic conversation. The Lord asked Shankarji not to support the Daityas. He replied that it was his custom to help whoever asked for his

help. If the Daityas prayed for his help, he could not refuse. The Lord asked him to find a way out of this debacle. Shankarji said, “I can suggest one thing. Put on Your Mohini form once more, and come before me. I was not present when You showed this form. I was somewhat intoxicated by the poison I had imbued. So, please show me that form of Yours, and I will do as You say.”

The Mohini form manifested. Shankarji was totally bewitched. He ran naked after Mohini. Seeing this, the Daityas lost faith in his ability to help them. “He is lost to Vishnu, as it is,” they thought, and abandoned all plans to seek Shankarji’s support.

It would be a great mistake to harbor any doubts, regarding Shankarji. The Shrimad Bhagwat is a Vaishnav Purana\*. That is why Vishnu is given greater importance here. When we use the name of any Devta, to speak about the Brahman, it is always the Brahman we refer to, because – एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति ‘e`kam sadvipraa bahudhaa vadanti’. The story is narrated because the Brahman called Narayana was to be shown as being greater than the Brahman called Shiva.

One angle to this story could be the lesson that when an atamaram\* like Shankarji can get carried away by a woman’s beauty, how can any man be sure of his self-control? Every man should be extra watchful on this score.

Another lesson we get is that Shankarji is always established in his Self. His Self is unaffected by what happens to his mind or body. The Lord Vishnu has praised him lavishly for this.

The Mahatmas have pointed out yet another significant point in this episode. Shankarji’s behavior was a way of throwing out the venom he had imbued, and make his body pure and healthy once more.

Concluding the episode, Shri Shukadevji Maharaj spoke of the Manvantaras. Then he said, “Parikshit, when the Daityas carried Bali’s body from the battlefield, to Shukracharya, he brought Bali back to life by making him drink the Sanjeevani. Bali became fully fit once more. He served Bhriguji and the Brahmins in his lineage, with great devotion. Shukracharya made Bali undertake a Yagya called Vishwajit\*, which brought him victory against the Devtas once again. A divine chariot, replete with horses, charioteer and all types of weapons emerged from the ritual fire. The Daityas rallied round, and they regained the reign of Heaven.

This is why Goswami Tulsidas says, स्वर्गात् ज्वल्प अन्त दुःखदाई “svargaao svalpa antadukhadayee’. It is the law of the world that no matter what position we get, we are liable to be deprived of it. The Valmiki Ramayana has this verse

सर्वे क्षयान्ता निचयाः पतनान्ताः समुच्छ्रयाः ।  
संयोगा विप्रयोगान्ता मरणाप्तं हि जीवितम् ॥

*Sarve` kshayaantaah nichayaah patanaantaah samucshrayaah,  
Sanyogaa viprayogaantaah maranaantaam hi jeevitam.*

No matter how high a person climbs, one day he will have to fall. No matter what we obtain, one day it will be gone. No matter what kind of life we lead, one day we will die. It is inevitable that all we have gathered, will, one day, be scattered.

So, Indra's kingdom was taken away one day. Bali was crowned King of Heaven. He started the Vishwajit Yagya, with the desire of gaining permanent rule over Heaven.

Aditi, the mother of the Devtas, was deeply distressed to hear this. I have told you that Diti and Aditi are both Kashyap's wives. It is one Lord, who is the witness, and substratum, of both. Diti gave birth to the demonic forces, and Aditi gave birth to the godly forces, like the Sun.

One day, Kashyapji Maharaj came to Aditi's abode. He saw it was filled with gloom. Kashyapji asked, "Devi, why are you sad?"

The question shows what the causes of sorrow in a mother of those days were. These were generally when a lady was unable to offer good food to welcome a visitor, or the inability to keep a commitment, or to worship the Lord. Women were sad when any of these happened. Good people are not saddened by personal losses. They feel dejected when their Dharma is harmed.

So, when Kashyapji asked what caused her to be sad, Aditi answered, "I am sad because my sons are forced to flee into the forest. They do not even get proper food to eat. My attachment to them is the cause of my sorrow."

Kashyapji thanked the Lord, when he heard this. "Lord, what Maya\* have You spread over the world? All creatures succumb to it. There is a stone, and people call it a diamond – पाषाणखण्डेष्वपि रत्नबुद्धिः 'paashanakhande`shvapi ratnabuddhih'. They consider a body made of flesh and blood to be theirs – आत्मधीः शोणितमांसपिण्डे 'aatmadheeh shonitamaansapinde'. They consider a woman, made of flesh, blood and bones, to be a source of pleasure, created for their enjoyment! What is this Leela of Yours, my Lord – व्यक्ताऽसौ काचन मोह-लीला 'vyaktaasao kaachana moha-leela'?"

Kashyapji told Aditi about the Payovrat ritual, which starts on Falgun Shukla Pratipada, and ends on the eleventh day of that lunar month. The Lord is worshipped during this period, with the one who undertakes this,

having nothing but milk during this period. This vrat brings excellent results. Aditi undertook this ritual. The Lord was pleased, and appeared before her. The Lord manifests according to the feeling with which the devotee worships Him. He has no personal preference about helping anybody. He is willing to manifest before whoever worships Him with single minded devotion. He has equal goodwill for all, and is loved by all. He is Advaitswaroop\*. Yet, when a person worships Him, He manifests to fulfill that person's desire – रक्षापेक्षामपेक्षते 'rakshaape`kshaamape`kshate`.'

When the Lord appeared before Aditi, He said, "Devi, you have completed your vrat. Your desire will be fulfilled. However, be very careful, and say nothing about this to anyone at all, no matter who questions you. The affect of the Devta increases, when it is kept secret.

नैतत् परस्मा आख्येयं पृष्टयापि कथंचन ।

सर्वं सम्पद्यते देवि देवगुह्यं सुसंवृतम् ॥ ८.१७.२०.

*Naitat parasmaa aakhye`yam prishtayaapi kathanchana,*

*Sarvam sampadyate`de`vi de`vaguhayam susamvritam.*

8.17.20.

At the appropriate time, the union of Kashyap and Aditi resulted in the birth of Vamana\* Bhagwan\*. There is a mantra in the Vedas:

वामनो ह विष्णुरास, इदं विष्णुर्विचक्रमे त्रेधा

निदधे पदम् विष्णुः समूढमस्य पांसुरे ।

*Vaamano ha vishnuraasa, idam vishnurvichakrame`tre`dhaa*

*Nidadhe`padam vishnuh samoodhamasya paansure`.*

Who is there, who can describe the seed of Vishnu? There is a space, situated between the spot from where the prana\* rises and descends, and the spot where the Apaana Vayu\* moves downwards. That is where Vamana Bhagwan abides.

When Vamana Bhagwan manifested, the Devtas arranged His thread ceremony, umbrella, the sacred thread, stick, and other items for the ritual. The Lord then proceeded in the direction of Bali's Yagya.

Everybody who was present in the Yagya mandapam\* was enchanted at the sight of Vamana. He was so beautiful, so appealing, and so impressive, that an emperor like Bali came out to welcome Him, bringing the ritual fire and Brahmins. They prayed to Vamana, to enter the spot of the Yagya.

This indicates that one should never go uninvited to a Yagya. We should enter only when we are invited by the yajamaan\* and Brahmins.

Vamana Bhagwan entered the Yagya shala\* at their invitation. A special chair was placed for Him. Bali welcomed Him with great respect, and said, “Maharaj, you have deigned to come to the Yagya. This indicates that you desire something. Please ask for whatever you want. Take gold, if you want gold, or elephants, or land, or wealth – whatever you desire is yours for the asking. You are a Brahmachari. If you wish to marry a suitable young lady, please tell me, and I will make all the arrangements.”

Vamana said, “Bali, you speak with the same magnanimity as your forefathers, Truly, your response is just what I had expected. Your Grandfather, Prahlad, had given a judgment which went against his own son. You Great Grandfather, Hiranyakashipu, was so powerful that he went to Vaikuntha, with his gadaa\*, to seek out Lord Vishnu and kill Him. Unable to find Him anywhere, he assumed he was dead, and went away. Your Father, Virochan, understood that it was his enemy who had come in the guise of a Brahmin, yet he gave his body, because that was what the Brahmin had asked for. You are truly blessed to have been born in such a noble lineage!”

See how lavishly the one who asks, has to praise the one who gives. People do not give anything, until they are flattered and pampered. That is why the great poet Kalidasa, has said, स्तोत्रं कस्य न तुष्टये “*stotram kasya na tushtaye*” – who is not pleased to receive praise?

Bali, too, was pleased to hear Vamana’s words of praise, and reiterated his offer to give whatever Vamana asked for.

Just then, Shukracharya recognized who Vamana was. He said, “Bali, this is Vishnu! He has come to you, to benefit the Devtas. Don’t make any pledge to give Him anything, or else he’ll snatch away everything you possess.”

Bali replied, “Guruji Maharaj, from the worldly angle, you are quite right in telling me to withdraw from my promise. One’s situation does become a problem when one gives away all one has. Life becomes filled with danger. I will become absolutely poor. However, how is it possible that Bali, the Grandson of Prahlad, takes a vow in the Yagya bhoomi\*, and then backs out? The greatest burden for the Earth, is that of the people who break their pledge. I can give up everything I possess, including my life, but I cannot break a pledge once I have given it.” As Bali disobeyed him, Shukracharya got angry with him, and said that he would become a pauper.

There is no doubt that Shukracharya has more power than Bali. His words, however, reveal that his thinking is still on the worldly plane. His treatise, called the Shukra Neeti, is also predominantly materialistic. The Sanskrit literature contains many texts upon economical ethics, which include the Shukra Neeti, Kamadak Neeti, and others. In the Shukra Neeti, Shukracharya has stated that we should not give away all our wealth. We

should use a portion of it for Dharma, a portion for fame, a portion for our own use, a portion for our dependents and a portion for investments. Our income should be systematically divided.

Bali, however, was committed to the Truth, and did not accept Shukracharya's advice. He urged Vamana Bhagwan again, to ask for whatever He wanted. Thus persuaded, the Lord asked for only three footsteps of earth, measured by His feet. Bali pleaded with Him to ask for something more, but Vamana Bhagwan replied that this was all He wanted. Bali accepted His wish, and sent for water for the sankalpa\*.

Preachers narrate humorous incident, which is not mentioned in the Bhagwat, but is given in other Puranas. The story says that when Bali asked for water, for the sankalpa, Shukracharya took on a tiny form and sat inside the spout of the jhaari\* to prevent the water from flowing into Bali's hand. Vamana Bhagwan said, "Let me see what is blocking the flow of the water." He picked up a sharp blade of grass, and poked it into the spout of the jhaari. This pierced one eye of Shukracharya, and he remained one eyed after that.

The message of this is that the vision of any person who tries to block a good deed, generosity, or Dharma, does not remain equal, but gets tainted. The water began to flow. Bali's wife supported Bali's pledge, when he said formally, "I give earth, covered by Vamana's three feet."

Vamana Bhagwan became Trivikram\* as soon as Bali completed his sankalpa. With the first foot, He covered Bali's earthly land. With the second foot, He covered Bali's Heavenly land, which he would get after death, as a result of good deeds on earth. Then the Lord asked Bali angrily, where He should place the third foot He had been promised.

Bali had a vision of the Lord's Virata\* form. Jambavaan had the opportunity to do three parikramas\* of the Virata Lord, and cry out the Jayghosh\*.

When the Daityas saw that their King had been tricked, they prepared to battle with Vamana. Seeing this, the Lord's attendants also armed themselves and began to kill the Daityas. Bali persuaded the Daityas to stop fighting.

Bali told the Lord, "Maharaj, please do not be displeased. It is true that you have taken both my worlds, by two footsteps, but I do have one place left, to surrender at Your feet. Please accept it as the third footstep.

पदं तृतीयं कुरु शीर्ष्णि मे निजम्।

*Padam triteeyam kuru sheersshni me` nijam.*

Please place Your foot on my head. All my possessions have been given to You, but the one who gave is not yet given. Please also accept the giver, because the arrogance of being the giver brings much suffering.”

Vamana Bhagwan placed His foot on Bali’s head, and took measure of his ego. When He took the loka\* and the parloka\*, He had taken the Artha, Dharma, and Kama away. Now, He took away Bali’s ego. This left no scope for any doubt about Bali’s liberation – mukti. That is why, even today, whenever someone does a great daan\*, it is called Balidaan\*. The next episode will come tomorrow.

Om Shantih! Shantih! Shantih!



## BHGAWATAMRIT

### Pravarchan VIII

#### (Skandha VIII & IX & X)

Jay-Vijay are both liberated souls, who live in the land of the Lord. Jay-Vijay descend thrice, to the world, for the purpose of establishing the fact that the Lord controls those in bondage as well as those who are liberated. He controls every being. To show that the liberated souls are under the Lord's control, Jay and Vijay descend from Vaikunth. They do not, however, cease to remember the Lord. Hiranyakashipu's son, Prahlad, was a devotee by nature. The Lord came as Narasimha, to liberate Hiranyakashipu. The four brothers, the Sanatkumars combined into one, and manifested as Prahlad. Their combined powers of knowledge, detachment, devotion, Dharma, vivek\*, and justice, supported Prahlad up to the time Hiranyakashipu was liberated.

Prahlad's son was Virochan, and his son was Bali. It was mentioned yesterday, that Prahlad's sense of justice made him give a judgment which went against his own son. It was also mentioned that Virochan gave up his life, at the request of a Brahmin, knowing full well that the Brahmin was his enemy in disguise. Bali had the complete gnan of the Bhagwat dharma". This is declared in the verse which gives the names of those who know the Bhagwat Dharma fully:

स्वयम्भूर्नारदः शम्भुः कुमारः कपिलो मनुः।

प्रह्लादो जनको भीष्मो बलिवैयासकिर्वयम्॥ ६.३.२०

*Svayambhurnaarah shanbhuh kumarah kapilo manuh,*

*Prahlaado janako bheeshmo balirvaiyaasakirvayam.*

6.3.20.

As narrated yesterday, Bali gave his all to the Lord, acting against the advice of his Guru. The significance of giving the loka-paraloka is that the merit of good deeds is given up. The fruit of good deeds is happiness – both here, and in Heaven. Dharma's fruits are visible and invisible as well. It gives happiness while we live, and happiness after we die. Bali offered up the cause of happiness (which is the good deeds he had done) as well as the Dharma which had prompted the good deeds, to the Lord. The Lord

responded by accepting Bali, and giving him a place at His feet. The Lord had asked him for only three foot-lengths of earth, but all Bali had, had been taken up by two foot-lengths of the Lord. When the question was raised about where the third foot should be placed, Bali – a knower of the Bhagwat Dharma - knew what should be offered, and offered himself.

The question is, how does one offer one's self? The principle of philosophy is that the doer is not a subject of the work done. Just as nobody can climb onto his own shoulder, the doer cannot be enjoyed by the work done by him. This is called the Karma-Karta-Virodha. If someone says, "I offer this to you," it is like a Gandharva\* Vivaha\*, where they exchange vows in secret, but part ways as soon as they quarrel. A total surrender of the ego is only possible when the Lord accepts the offering of our self. A person who gives himself to another, may withdraw. However, nobody can withdraw once the Lord has accepted him. This is the principle of the Bhakti Shastra\*.

So, the Lord placed His foot on Bali's head, and accepted him. The Lord said, "Bali, all you were, are, and will be, is Mine. This includes your Dharma, karma\*, sukha\*, dukha\*, body, and ahankara\*." This is being accepted by the Lord!

Giving is complete only when it is accepted by the receiver. A person may continue to give, but if the receiver refuses to accept, how can the gift be fulfilled? Bali's offering was fulfilled.

To establish Bali's sincerity, the Lord told Garuda to tie Bali up. Garuda obeyed. Bali was trussed up thoroughly.

Imagine the scene. When Bali was tied up, Prahlad came, to see the excellence and depth of his Grandson's devotion. He did a stuti of the Lord. "Lord, it was You, who gave Bali the aishwarya\*, and it was You who took it away. Your giving and you taking are filled with benevolence."

Bali's wife, Vindhyavali, said, "Maharaj, You have always been, and always will be, the Lord of the world. Those who are foolish consider worldly goods to be theirs – स्वाम्यं तु तत्र कुधियोऽपर ईश कुर्युः '*svaamyam tu tatra kudhiyoapara eesha kuryuh*'. It is a Grace that You took back what belonged to You."

Brahmaji also came at that time, and said, "Lord, even he who offers You just a blade of grass and a handful of water, gets the best of good fortune. Bali gave You the daan of Triloki\*, and You have deigned to accept even his ego. Now, the Bhakti Sampradaya will vanish, if even Bali is kept in bondage."

The Lord replied, "Brahmaji, whenever I Grace someone, I take away all they have. I leave them with nothing. I do this to make sure that they are no longer intoxicated with wealth, and will never disdain Me, or any other."

ब्रह्मन् यमनुगृह्णामि तद्विशो विधुनोम्यहम्।

यन्मदः पुरुषः स्तब्धो लोकं मां चावमन्यते॥ ८.२२.२४.

*Brahman yamanugrihnaami tadvisho vidhunomyaham,*

*Yanmadah purushah stabdho lokam maam chaavamanyate`.*

8.22.24.

Then the Lord said, “I have done a formal sankalpa, holding kusha\*, akshata\* and water, in the palm of My hand. So, when I took everything which belonged to Bali, everything of Mine became his, as well. Now he will go to Satal Loka\*, where he will have all the luxuries as well as satsang. Prahladji will come too, and I will live there, as their watchman.”

Just see what the Lord did, after taking away everything from Bali. He stood, as a servant, with the Gada in His hand. It is said that Bali’s palace in Satal Loka, had twelve entrances. Ravana once went, to fight Bali. Nobody obstructed his path. When he reached Bali’s door, he found a dwarf guarding the entrance, with a gada in his hand. He saw the same Vamana guard every entrance he went to. Amazed, he asked, “Who are you, to stop me from entering?” Vamana replied that this was not the right time for him to enter.

Ravana threatened to physically lift, and throw Vamana aside. Hearing this, the Lord pushed Ravana with the toes of His left foot. Ravana was thrown from Satal Loka to Lanka. He never again attempted to face Bali.

This story shows that no matter how many vicissitudes come into the life of a person who does bhajan of the Lord, he ultimately gets everything. By the Lord’s Grace, Bali got glory, luxury, protection, satsang, and also the position which had been taken away. Over and above all this, he got the Lord! This same Bali will be Indra, in the next Manvantara. As soon as this Manvantara ends, Bali will become Indra.

After concluding the story of Bali, in the eighth Skandha, Shri Shukadevji Maharaj answers Parikshit’s questions about the Vedas. This comes in the last – the twenty fourth – chapter. He says that the Vedas abide even at the time of Pralay. The Lord takes on the form of a Matsya\*. All the medicinal plants, and seeds of animals, are placed on a giant boat. The Lord protects the contents of the boat, the Saptarshis\*, and Rajarshi\* Satyavrata. The Lord first comes in to the cupped palms of Satyavrata, as a tiny fish, seeking his protection. The Lord shows that nobody protects anybody – only the Lord protects all creatures. It is a false vanity when people think that they are protecting others. Matsya Bhagwan\* showed Rajarshi Satyavrata that he had protected the fish only in a kamandalu and then in a lake. “But I am protecting you during the Pralay”, he said, tying Satyavrata’s boat to His

snout. He not only saved the King, He also gave him the knowledge of the Vedas. This is called the Matsya Purana.

King Satyavrata praised the Lord, saying, “The Atmagnan of the people has been smothered by Avidya. Their intellect is inclined towards sense objects. Please tell us how to deal with this.”

The Lord replied, “The only solution is to obtain the knowledge of the Vedas. Unless one has this knowledge, it is not possible to understand the subtleties of Dharma, Bhakti, Loka, Para Loka. This knowledge is not created by Ishwara, or by a jeeva. It does not emerge from the inanimate, or the shunya\*. It is a complete knowledge which can be known only through personal enlightenment.”

The eighth Skandha ends here, and the ninth begins. I will tell you just the essence of the ninth Skandha, because I am eager to reach the Krishna Leela, with all possible speed. So I propose to describe all the lineages with extreme brevity. Even Raja Parikshit – after hearing the ninth Skandha – tells Shri Shukadevji Maharaj, “You have described all the lineages. Now please tell me about the glory of Shri Krishna.”

कथितो वंशविस्तारो भवता सोमसूर्ययोः ।

राज्ञां चोभयवंश्यानां चरितं परमाद्भुतम् ॥ १०.१.१

*Kathito vanshavistaaro bhavataa somasooryayoh,*

*Raagnaa chobhayavanshaanaam charitam paramaadbhutam.*

10.1.1.

Now see what the ninth Skandha is. The eighth Skandha was called the ‘Sadharma Skandha’\*, and the ninth Skandha is called the ‘Ishanukatha Skandha’. There is a difference between Sadharma and Ishanukatha Skandhas. Sadharma gives the stories of religious rites, and its purpose is to purify the character of those who read or hear it. The Ishanukatha, however, is the story of devotees. So, the Ishanukatha contains the descriptions of the Manvantaras, the Kings therein, the children of the Kings, their followers, and their people.

Bhakti is a quality of the heart. It does not talk about whether sandalwood paste should be applied vertically on the forehead, or horizontally. Nor is there any reference to whether a rosary of Tulsi beads is superior to Rudhrakasha beads, and whether the clothes we wear should be red or yellow.

The jeeva is a part of the Lord. It may be in the form of a tree, a creeper, an animal or a bird. A portion of something is always connected to the whole.

Bhakti cannot be separated from the object of its devotion. You will see that everybody in the Shrimad Bhagwat is a devotee.

The Vaivasvat Manvantara has twenty four types of activities. These result in different characteristics in people. The Satpurush\* endeavor to lead everybody towards the Lord. This is why the ninth Skandha contains twenty four chapters, and indicates how people fitted with twenty four kinds of drives are lead towards the Lord. Of the thousands of people described here, none remain bound by Maya. All are liberated. Each one if filled with detachment.

Two things are necessary, for a person to be free of desires. Detachment and Devotion. Bhakti – devotion - transforms desire, and detachment weakens it. Both are described in this Skandha.

Vivasvat Manu had ten sons, who all became great Kings. The story of the Surya Vansha\* is presented in twelve chapters, because the Sun is dvadashatma\*. So is the Lord Vishnu. Hence, though the Lord Shri Krishna is born in the Chandra Vansh\*, He is described as a dvadashatma. The twenty four chapters are divided into two, with twelve each describing the Surya and the Chandra lineages.

Of Manu's sons, some spread the Gnan Marg\*, some spread the Vairagya Marg, some, the Bhakti Marg, and some spread the principle of keeping a promise. Each son of Manu had a special quality. If you read anybody's biography, make sure to find out what their specialty is. In his article called 'Tattva Deep', Shri Vallabhacharyaji Maharaj has described all the specialties, and other great Teachers have written commentaries upon it.

At first, Vivasvan Manu had no children. He asked Vasishthaji to undertake a Yagya for him. The sankalpa was for a son, but a daughter was born. They began to investigate the reason. It was found that the Queen had asked Brahmaji for a daughter, instead of a son. Ultimately Vasishthaji prayed to the Lord, and by His Grace, the sex of the child was transformed from female to male. However, after some time, he was turned into a maiden, because of Shankarji's wrath. Later on, it was decided that he would alternately become a man for some time, and a woman for some time.

There is nothing unbelievable in this. Everything is possible in this indefinable creation. We are unable to believe in the unlimited possibilities because our knowledge is limited. It is extremely difficult to gauge the number of elements and secrets in Nature. Nor can we imagine how the powerful and great, divine people can manipulate Nature. The true devotees of the Lord have access to His power, and can make possible what seems impossible to us.

The story of Raja Sharyati and Chyavan Rishi comes next. Raja Sharyati had a beautiful daughter called Sukanya. One day, the King went into the forest with Sukanya and some soldiers, and they reached Chyavan Rishi's Ashram. Sukanya saw an anthill, with two rays of bright light shining in it. Intrigued, she picked up a thorn and pricked the points of light. Blood began to ooze out, instead. The stool and urine of the soldiers were blocked. The King was perplexed. He came to the conclusion that one of his soldiers had done something very wrong. Sukanya felt very frightened, but she admitted her folly. The King was terrified, but Chyavan Rishi emerged, and told the King not to worry. Then he offered to marry Sukanya. The King got them married.

Some time later, the Ashvini Kumars came to the Ashrama of Chyavan Rishi. They restored his youth, at his request. Chyavan Rishi was so pleased that he began to plan that they receive a portion of the Yagya. Their share had been discontinued because they were Ayurvedic practitioners. Doctors have to uproot medicinal plants, even if it is for the purpose of healing the sick. They mix the plants with impure items, like meat. That is why the Devtas had refused to give them a portion of the Yagya. However, thanks to Chyavan Rishi, they began to get a portion once again.

Maharshi Chyavan had tremendous powers. He made his father-in-law, King Sharyati, undertake a Som Yagya, with the intention of procuring the Ashvini Kumar's portion for them. Unable to tolerate this, Indra lifted his Vajra to kill King Sharyati, but Chyavan Rishi used his powers to immobilize Indra's hand. He relented only after all the Devtas had pleaded with him, and Indra had agreed to allow the Ashvini Kumars to take a portion of the Yagya.

Nabhag was also born in Manu's lineage. He spent many years studying at his Guru's Ashrama. When he returned, he found that his brothers had usurped his share of the wealth, leaving nothing for him. When he asked his brothers for his share, they replied, "This old Father is your share. There is no other share for you."

Nabhag went to his Father, and told him everything. The Father said, "My son, these people are cheating you, but don't worry. Brahmins are doing a Yagya at a certain place. They will make a mistake while chanting the hymn. When you correct their mistake, they will let you have the materials of the Yagya."

Nabhag did as his father said. When he began to gather up the materials at the end of the Yagya, Rudra came and stopped him. "How can you take what is mine?" he asked. Nabhag replied that the Yagyik priests had given it

to him. Rudra said, “All right. I will accept the judgement of your Father regarding this.”

After listening to the whole story, Nabhag’s Father said, “Yes, my son, it is true that this belongs to Rudra. It is not yours.”

Rudra was pleased that Nabhag’s Father had given an impartial judgement. He gave everything to Nabhag, and Nabhag became a wealthy man.

Nabhag’s son was Ambarish. His devotion for the Lord was so intense that his heart burnt like a furnace, with his longing. He burnt with desire for the Lord. So he was given the name Ambarish. He spent his whole life in serving the Lord. He would walk to the temple, and sweep the floor himself. He experienced joy in serving the Lord.

Once, Ambarish did a sankalpa to observe the Ekadashi Vrat for one year. On the last day, just as he was about to culminate it with a particular procedure, Durvasaji came in uninvited. Ambarish welcomed him and respectfully asked him to have a meal. Durvasaji replied that he would first go to the Yamuna, with all his disciples, bathe, do the ritual of the Sandhya Vandan, and then return for a meal.

Durvasaji delayed. The auspicious period for the paran was coming to an end. Ambarish was trapped in a Dharma dilemma. He asked the Brahmins what he should do. “Take a sip of the holy water within the auspicious period,” they advised. “This is breaking the fast without eating anything before your guest has eaten – अशितं नाशितं च तत् ‘*ashitam naashitam cha tat*’.”

Look, what we call ‘naashtaa’ in Hindi, is नाशितं ‘*naashitam*’, because it is just a snack. It is not a full meal, but it help ease the pangs of hunger. That is why it is called नाशितं ‘*naashitam*’.

Ambarish did as the Brahmins advised – chose the middle path, between नाशितं ‘*naashitam*’ and अशितं ‘*ashitam*’ – he took charanamrit. Durvasa returned just then, and was furious to see that Ambarish had taken some water. He created a demoness called Krityaa, to kill Ambarish. The Lord’s discus, called Sudarshan, was protecting Ambarish. It rose up when Krityaa rushed at him, and she fled in fear. Not satisfied with this, the Sudarshan Chakra turned towards Durvasaji. Durvasaji started to run, trying to escape from the Chakra. He went to the abode of Brahma, but who there, has the power to protect him from the Lord’s Sudarshan Chakra? Brahmaji confessed his inability to save Durvasaji. Durvasaji received an identical reply at Kailash, the abode of the Lord Shiva. He rushed to Vaikunth, and prayed to the Lord Vishnu, to call His Chakra off. However, see the reply he got from the Lord –

अहं भक्तपराधीनो ह्यस्वतन्त्र इव द्विज ।  
साधुभिर्ग्रस्तहृदयो भक्तैर्भक्तजनप्रियः ॥  
नाहमात्मानमाशासे मदभक्तैः साधुभिर्विना ।  
श्रियं चात्यन्तिकीं ब्रह्मन् येषां गतिरहं परा ॥ ९.४.६३-६४

*Aham bhaktaparaadheeno hyasvatantra iva dvija,  
Saadhubhirgrastahridayo bhaktairbhaktajanapriyah.  
Naahamaatmaanamaabhaase`madbhaktaih saadhubhervinaa,  
Shriyam chaatyantikeem Brahman ye`shaam gatiraham paraa. 9.4.63-64.*

“Durvasaji, I am controlled by My devotees. I belong to them and they belong to Me. My devotees win Me over, the way a loving wife wins over her husband. Under the circumstances, I can do nothing to help you, but I can tell you how to save yourself. You must surrender to the person you have wronged, and which caused My Chakra to rise up and chase you. He is the only person who can save you now.”

Durvasaji surrendered at the feet of Ambarish, begging him to call off the fearsome Chakra. Ambarish was distressed, and begged Durvasaji to get up. Then he folded his hands, and prayed to the Sudarshan Chakra to forgive Durvasaji. The Sudarshan Chakra quietened, Ambarish bowed down to Durvasaji, served him a good meal, and then had his own.

The message given by the Lord to Durvasaji, through these two verses, is the foundation for four branches of the Bhakti samparaday\*, and all of them accept the Lord as their Acharya.

People often accuse Durvasaji of being bad tempered and unfair, but that is a mistake. Durvasaji is an enlightened devotee, and a part of Shankarji. He sacrifices his own reputation in order to show the greatness of the Lord’s devotees, and how they are protected by the Lord. People would never have known Ambarish’s patience and forbearance, had Durvasa not shown anger. Nor would they have known how the Lord’s protection was always with His devotee. Durvasaji thus became the catalyst for revealing the greatness of the Lord and His devotees. We tend to see only the outward behavior of Durvasaji. If we look a bit deeper, we will see that his heart is filled with love.

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj narrated the stories of the Ikshavaku Vansha, Mandhata, Saubhari Rishi, Trishanku, Harishchandra, and finally, the character of the sages. He explained that the sons of King Sagar (in Manu’s lineage) set out to look for the Yagya horse, which had been stolen. The Yagya could not be completed successfully without it. The princes dug up a great pit, as they looked for the horse, and reached the Ashram of Kapil Bhagwan. They saw the horse tied there, and jumped to the conclusion that



Kapil Bhagwan had stolen it. They abused him and called him a thief. Kapil Bhagwan raised his eyes to look at them, and they were instantly burnt to cinders.

It is a great injustice to accuse someone without verifying the facts. The sons of Sagar made this mistake, and the result was that they were destroyed.

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj said, “Parikshit, Sagar had a son called Asamanjas, by his wife, Keshini. Asamanjas had a son called Anshuman. Anshuman went to Kapildevji, and pleaded with him to forgive his uncles for their misbehavior. Kapilji was pleased with him, and told him he could take back his Grandfather’s Yagyik horse. He also said, “Anshuman, my child, your uncles have turned into ashes. Their souls can be liberated only by the waters of the river Ganga. There is no other method for their salvation.”

With the return of the horse, Sagar completed the Yagya. He gave the Kingdom to Anshuman, and freed himself of all worldly ties. Anshuman tried his best to bring Gangaji to earth, but did not succeed. It was his Grandson, Bhagirath, who ultimately achieved this. The benefits of Ganga’s coming to earth are too obvious to require elaboration.

Gangaji is filled with Divine powers. She freed the accursed souls of Sagar’s sons, and made them pure. The meaning of the word ‘Ganga’, is – गच्छति ‘*gacchati*’ or गं गगनं गच्छति व्याप्नोति ‘*gam gaganam gacchati vyaapnoti*’. Both are grammatically correct, with two roots being used. The Ganga is the flow of the knowledge which fills the universe. She originates at the feet of the Lord Vishnu. A bath in her waters purifies our life. So does a sip of her waters, or even the mere sight of this holy river. The Ganga has three forms – the Adhidaivik, the Adhyatmik, and the Adhibhautik. The Adhibhautik form is visible to all, but only the great Mahapurush know her Adhidaivik and Adhyatmik forms.

Sudas came later on, in Bhagirath’s lineage. After him, the lineage was changed. Vasishthaji made the change because the Lord was to be born as Shri Ramachandra, in the lineage. Raghu, Aja, and then Dasharath, were born successively, in the same lineage. Dasharath had four sons – Ramachandra, Laxman, Bharat and Shatrughna.

The Shrimad Bhagwat gives the story of Shri Ramachandra in just three chapters. Some people, who undertake the seven day ritual discourse of the Bhagwat, take a long time to narrate it. Some get carried away, and take as much as three days for this. They are not concerned with other episodes. The character of the Lord is so famous, that Valmiki and other Munis have described it at length. It is also mentioned in the Mahabharata. Most people are familiar with Goswami Tulsidas’ description of Ramcharit. That is why I narrate it in brief, as given in the Bhagwat.

As per the Shrimad Bhagwat, Shri Rama is not born only to Kaushalya. Kaushalya is the personification of a pure intellect. Dasharath is the personification of a pure mind. The combination brings forth the manifestation of the essence of the Lord, in the hearts of both Kaushalya and Dasharath. To establish and clarify this point, the author of the Bhagwat presents it, to reveal the Adhibhautik, Adhidaivik and Adhyatmik form of Shri Ramachandra.

Shri Shankaracharya Bhagwan describes the Adhyatmik glory of Shri Ramachandra as follows:

तीर्त्वा मोहार्णवम् हत्वा कामक्रोधादिराक्षसम्।  
शान्तिसीतासमायुक्तः आत्मारामो विराजते॥

*Teertvaa mohaarnavam hatvaa kaamakrodhaadiraakshasam,  
Shaantiseetasamaayuktah aatmaaramo viraajate`.*

Shri Ramanujacharya heard the Valmiki Ramayana eighteen times from his Guru, and he experienced eighteen interpretations of the story. One of these is Adhyatmik. So, the Adhyatmik interpretation of the life of Shri Ramachandra has been prevalent since ancient times.

The Shrimad Bhagwat does not mention the Tadaka-vadh, but it does mention the killing of Subahu. It says that the Lord threw Marich a great distance away, but killed Subahu. Shri Ramachandra's childhood is given in short, but has much to teach. It teaches us how we should love our brothers, obtain satsang of Rishis, and allow younger brothers to win, while playing together.

According to the Shrimad Bhagwat, the Lord Shri Ramachandra's character establishes the righteous paths of keeping a pledge, going to the forest, accepting adversity, reducing the Earth's burden, loving the wife, and looking after the people. Shri Ramachandra sacrificed His personal happiness for the sake of His people. In the Uttar Ramcharit, it is said:

स्नेहं दयां च मैत्रीं च अथवा जानकीमपि।  
आराधनाय लोकस्य मुंचतो नास्ति मे व्यथा॥

*Sne`ham dayaam cha maitreem cha athavaa jaanakeemapi,  
Aaraadhanaaya lokasya munchato naasti me` vyathaa.*

“For the sake of My people, I can sacrifice those I love, My innate compassion, My own happiness, and even My beloved Janaki. I will feel no regret in doing any of these, if it is required to make My people happy.”

That is why the Shrimad Bhagwat says – उपासितलोकाय उपशिक्षितात्मने ‘upaasitalokaaya upashikshataatmane’. The meaning of this is that the Lord, Shri Ramachandra, schooled His own heart. He did not lecture other people. It also indicates that Shri Ramachandra did not worship Ishwara, the Brahman, or Himself. He worshipped only the people. For this, He went to the forests and undertook several kinds of hardships.

Janakiji once said to Shri Rama, “We have now come to the Dandakaranya. Many demons wander here. If they see Your bow, arrows and other weapons, they will know that You are a Kshatriya, and will attack us.”

The Lord replied, “Janaki, I can give up My life. I can leave You and Laxman, too, if need be. I can never, however, give up My pledge. My pledge is sacrosanct. To keep My pledge is My first Dharma.” That is why it is said, रामो द्विर्नाभिभाषते, रामो विग्रहवान् धर्मः ‘Raamo dvirnabhibhashate’, *Raamo vighrahavaan dharmah.*’

The Lord Shri Ramachandra not only met the Rishis, He also went to Shabari’s Ashram. Shabari’s state was such, that every night she dreamt that Shri Ramachandra would come the next day. A Bhojpuri poet has written, सबरी देखे ले सपनवाँ आज घर रामा अइहें ना! ‘sabari de`khe` le` sapanavaa aaj ghara raamaa aaihain naa.’ Shabari would gather fruits and flowers every day. She would sweep the pathway to the Ashram, apply fresh paste on the floor of her hut, and tell people, “He will surely come today.” She would place a mat in anticipation of His coming, and sitting on it.

The Lord Shri Rama knew of the love in Shabari’s heart, so He went to her Ashram. Shabari’s joy knew no bounds. She said, “Lord, I am just a poor woman, unfit in every way. How am I to serve You?”

The Lord said, “Shabari, listen carefully. I am telling you something important.”

Shabari said, “All right, Lord, please tell me.”

The Lord said, “Look, Shabari, one kind of Bhakti is to have satsang. Another kind is to love to listen to discourses upon Me.”

प्रथम भगति संतनकर संग।

दूसरी रति मम कथा प्रसंगा॥

*Prathama bhagati santanakara sangaa,*

*Doosari rati mama katha prasangaa.*

The Lord enumerated nine kinds of Bhakti, and said, “If a person obtains even one kind, he becomes dear to Me. You, Shabari, have all nine kinds of Bhakti,”

सकल प्रकार भगति दृढ तोरे ।

*Sakala prakaara bhagati dridha tore`.*

The kind of praise bestowed by the Lord on Shabari, is not found elsewhere. The Lord didn't really wish to preach to Shabari; He just wanted to praise her.

Then the Lord Shri Ramachandra befriended Sugriva, and built a bridge across the sea. To build bridges is His job. Because of Him, Vasishtha and Vishwamitra became friends, Dasharath and Janaka became relatives, and Kevat met Vasishtha. Wherever there were differences, some chasm of some kind, the Lord bridged the difference.

After befriending Sugriva, the Lord Shri Ramachandra attacked Lanka. He defeated Ravana and the Rakshasas, and brought Sitaji back. They were crowned, when they returned to Ayodhya. The Lord organized the best possible facilities for His people. The Rama Rajya\* is held up as an example of the ideal, even today.

The Lord Shri Ramachandra was so generous, that He kept only His clothes and sacred thread. His Kingdom and wealth were all gifted to the Brahmins. The Brahmins said, "Please look after the Kingdom. We are too busy with our rituals of worship. It is only proper that the administration of the Kingdom is in Your hands." The Lord accepted their plea, and ruled on their behalf.

The Lord Shri Ramachandra would move about the city at night, to find out the true state of the Kingdom. He did not consider it adequate to depend only upon His spies. On one occasion, He heard a washer man criticize Sitaji. This was enough to make Him tell Laxman to take Sitaji to the Ashram of Maharshi Valmiki.

This decision appears to be extremely harsh, but the Lord Shri Rama had His own reasoning. Had He not sent Sitaji away like this, nobody would have known the quality of her love for Him. She had been kidnapped by Ravana, and taken to Lanka by force. Sitaji was helpless. This was the cause of a war, and Sitaji was brought home again. She was totally blameless. Despite this, she was sent off to Valmiki Ashram at the words of a mere washerman. How wonderful Sitaji is, that no shadow of resentment rose in her heart!

Once, some people asked Mahatma Gandhi about the injustice done to Draupadi by the Pandavas, to Damyanti by Nala, and to Sitaji by Shri Rama. Mahatma Gandhi responded by saying, "It should be asked to Draupadi,

Damyanti and Sitaji, whether they considered themselves victims of injustice.”

Sitaji’s love for the Lord Shri Rama was so strong that not even the harshest behavior could affect it in any way. Seeing her greatness, Valmiki was compelled to say, सीतायाः चरितं महत् ‘*seetaayaah charitam mahat*’ – meaning Sitaji’s character is a great one.

The Shrimad Bhagwat gives the names of three generations of Shri Rama. The story of King Videha follows. Raja Nimi told his Guru, Vasishta that Videha had stopped identifying with his body, when he obtained enlightenment. The descendents were thereafter referred to as the Nimi Vansha, or the Chandra Vansha. Chandrama manifested from the eye of Atri, and this was the start of the Chandra Vansha.

The stories of the Chandra Vansha include the characters of Vishwamitra, Parasurama, and Sahasrarjuna. Sahasrarjuna was so powerful that he defeated even a warrior like Ravana. Nobody should think that people born in the Chandra Vansha lack valor.

The Chandra Vansha is predominated by the mind, whereas the Surya Vansha is predominated by the intellect. The Saur tattva\* predominates in the intellect, while the Chaandra tattva\* predominates in the mind. The mind flourishes on emotion, whereas the intellect flourishes on knowledge. The intellect progresses with brightness and knowledge. The mind progresses with a glow of happiness and feeling. These are the differences in the characteristics of these two lineages.

The Lord manifests in both, the Saur\* and Chandra\* Vanshas. This signifies that one can obtain the Lord by the methods of love and thought.

The story of Pururva of the Chandra Vansha comes next. It is given in Vaatsyayana’s treatise upon the Kama Shastra\*, also. Pururva went to Heaven. All the Devtas stood up to greet him. Devraj introduced him to the Devtas one by one. Pururva would fold his hands and bow respectfully to each, as he was introduced. Artha Devta\* and Kama Devta\* were present, but Pururva did not show them respect, because he did not give importance to material wealth, or sensual pleasures. This angered the two Devtas, and they cursed him, saying, “You will become an Emperor, but you will obtain no pleasure from wealth, or your sense organs.”

You see, just as Dharma and Moksha are desirable objectives, so are Artha and Kama important for our happiness. To live, we need wealth as well as pleasure. Both are demi-gods, worthy of respect.

Pururva met Urvashi in Indraloka. This story is also given in the Vedas. Urvashi was lovely, but sharp tongued. She was rough spoken, because she knew that she would have to leave Pururva after he had developed

detachment. She was loving, because it was through him that the noble lineage was to continue.

Then Shri Shukadevji Maharaj told King Parikshit about Jamadagni, Parasurama, and Vishwamitra. After that he came to the story of Yayati. Yayati married Devyani (the daughter of Shukracharya) and Sharmishtha (the daughter of Vrishaparva). There was considerable animosity between the two wives, but both had sons. Devyani's sons were Yadu and Turvasu. Sharmishtha had three sons, Druhya, Anu, and Puru. Yadu was the eldest and Puru was the youngest. Several generations later, the Lord Shri Krishna was born in Yadu's lineage.

Yayati's life contained an excess of indulgence as well as acute detachment. His indulgence was so insatiable that he took the youth of his youngest son, Puru. Then he acquired detachment, returned Puru's youth, gave him the Kingdom, and went into the forest. He obtained the experience of the Atman, and attained salvation.

After Yayati came the descendents of Puru – King Dushyant, his son Bharat, and Rantidev. Bharat was so strong and brave that at the age of five, he would tie up ferocious tigers and play with them. It was as though the Lord's courage and power had manifested in his life.

Rantidev's story is quite extraordinary. He did not get food or water for forty eight days. On the forty ninth day, he got some items, and began to cook them. A learned guest came uninvited to his house, so Rantidev served the food to him. He gave what was left, to a Shudra visitor. A butcher came after that, and was offered whatever little Rantidev could gather. Rantidev felt that everybody has Bhakti for the Lord. He began to pray –

न कामयेऽहं गतिमाश्वरात् पराम् अष्टद्वियुक्तामपुनर्भवं वा ।

आर्तिं प्रपद्येऽखिलदेहभाजाम् अन्तःस्थितो येन भवन्त्युदुःखाः ॥ ९.२१.१२.

*Na kaamaye`aham gatimeeshvaraat paraam ashtardhiyuktaamapunarbhavam vaa,*

*Aarti prapadye`akhilade`habhaajaam antahsthitto ye`na bhavantyudukhaah.*  
9.21.12.

“Lord, I desire nothing from You – neither the Heaven after death, nor ashta siddhi\*. I do not even desire liberation. Please Grace me by granting one thing. Let me be seated in the hearts of all those who suffer in this world.”

Imagine that the Lord asked, “What will you do in everybody's heart, Rantidev? I abide there, as it is. What work do you have there?”

Rantidev replied, “I am aware that You are seated in every heart. However, You merely observe all that happens. Please continue to be seated there, and

watch as You do, but let the people receive the happiness they are destined to get, but allow me to take all their sorrows. The people of this world are very unhappy. So, let their suffering be removed, and happiness fill their lives. This is my wish, my Lord.”

Seeing Rantidev’s compassion and magnanimity, Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh all manifested before him. They said, “Rantidev, no Brahmin, Shudra or Chandala came to trouble you. It was the three of us, who had come in their guise. Our purpose was to show the world what the thoughts and feelings of an elevated, pure-hearted person are like.”

Later on, in the same lineage, there was a King called Jyamagh. After winning a war, he returned home with the princess, Bhojya (of the vanquished Kingdom), seated beside him on the chariot. When his Queen, Shaivya saw this, she began to berate Jyamagh. “Who have you seated on the chariot, in my rightful place?” she demanded angrily.

King Jyamagh was afraid of his wife, and said hastily, “I have brought her to make her your daughter-in-law.”

“But we have no son!” said the Queen. “Nor have you brought up the son of any relative. How can you make her your daughter-in-law?”

The King replied, “We may not have a son now, but she will marry the son you get in future.”

The next episode is of King Shurasena of Mathura, also of the same lineage. The clans of the Kauravas and Pandavas come from this lineage. Hundreds of thousands of names are given in the descriptions of all these Kings. Time does not permit detailed enumeration. I am just touching upon the subject. I touch them as lightly as a person touches grass, as he passes a village – ग्रामं गच्छन् तृणं स्पृशति ‘*graamam gachchan trinam sprishati.*’

Several generations later, Vasudevji was born in Shurasen’s lineage. His wife was Devki. They had seven sons, and Shri Krishna was born as the eighth. His birth brought everything propitious to the earth. Whoever saw and loved the knowledge, affection, beauty and wisdom of Shri Krishna, obtained salvation.

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj concluded the ninth Skandha with this episode. At the beginning of the tenth Skandha, Parikshit said, “Maharaj, you described the lineages of the Kings at great length, but you have the story of the birth of Shri Krishna of the Yadu Vansha, in just five verses. I am not satisfied with this short narration. Please describe the Shri Krishna charita\* at length.”

निवृत्ततर्पैरुपगीयमानाद् भवौषधाच्छ्रोत्रमनोऽभिरामात्।

क उत्तमश्लोकगुणानुवादात् पुमान् विरज्येत विनाऽपशुघ्नात्॥ १०.१.४.

*Nivrittatarshairupageeyamaanaad  
bhavaushadhaachshrotramanoabhiraamaat,  
Ka uttamashlokagunaanuvaadaat pumaan virajye`ta vinaapashughnaat.  
10.1.4.*

“Maharaj, the character of the Lord is a medicine. It saves us from the cycles of birth and death. It is not made by a greedy doctor. Greedy doctors prolong the illness of their patients, to earn more money. This medicine is such, that even the greatest devotees of the Lord – who have no desire for anything – experience proximity with the Lord. They take joy in feeling close to Him, and keep singing His glories. This medicine is not at all bitter; it is sweet. Sweet for the ears, and sweet for the mind. Amongst those who sing the Lord’s glories, are the liberated people. Secondly, His glories help those who wish to escape from worldly bondage. Thirdly, it brings happiness to the ears and minds of those who listen. So, whoever stays away from listening to the discourses upon the character of the Lord, is an apashughna.” The meaning of apashughna is – अपशुकम् आत्मानम् हन्ति ‘*apashukam aatmaanam hanti*’ - it is a person who kills himself. He deprives himself of joy and comfort.

Parikshit said, “My Grandfather, Yudhishtira, and other elders, were battling against the armies of the Kauravas. That army was like a vast ocean, impossible to cross. It contained mighty warriors like Bhishma, Drona and Karna. My forefathers took the support of the lotus feet of the Lord Shri Krishna. With His help, they succeeded, just as one successfully crosses the ocean with the help of an ocean liner.

द्रौण्यस्त्रविप्लुष्टमिदं मदङ्गं सन्तानबीजं कुरुपाण्डवानाम्।

जुगोप कुक्षिगत आत्तचक्रो मातुश्च मे यः शरणं गतायाः॥ १०.१.६.

*Draunyastraviplushtamidam                      madangam                      santaanabeejam  
kurupaandavaanaam,  
Jugopa kukshingata aattachakro maatushcha me`yah sharanam gataayaah.  
10.1.6.*

Sir, when I was in my Mother’s womb, I was being burnt by the Brahmastra\* thrown by Ashwatthama. At that time, I had no emotion. Nor was I able to speak. I did not know the Lord, and had no ability to pray. Still, the Lord came running to save me, because my Mother surrendered to Him. He could have blocked Ashwatthama’s Brahmastra with either His Gada, or His Chakra, but He was so impatient to save me that he took the Gada in one hand and the Chakra in the other. Maharaj, I wish to hear about that same



Lord. I feel no hunger and no thirst. I aspire only to imbue the nectar of the katha of Shri Krishna, from your gracious lips.”

Shri Shukadevji congratulated Parikshit with great joy, and said,

वासुदेवकथाप्रशनः पुरुषांस्त्रीन् पुनाति हि ।

वक्तारं पृच्छकं श्रोतृस्तत्पादसलिलं यथा ॥ १०.१.१६

*Vaasude`vakathaaprashnah purushaarstreen punati hi,  
Vaktaaram prichchakam shrotrinstatpaadasalilam yathaa.  
10.1.16.*

“King, whenever a question concerning the Lord is asked, the one who asks the question, the one who answers it, and the one who listens to the conversation – all three are purified. The sins of the frightened tongue of the questioner are wiped away. The quiet tongue of the one who answers, is activated. Sweetness begins to flow into the hollow ears of the one who hears. Our tongues, ears, and hearts have become immensely dirtied by worldly talk, worldly pleasures, Kings, depraved men, women, others, wealth, and atheists. So, when the Ganga of the Lord’s katha enters our heart, not only is a person purified; he becomes supremely pure.”

Shukadevji Maharaj began to tell the story of Shri Krishna without further preamble. He said:

भूमिर्दृप्तनृपव्याजदैत्यानीक-शतायुतैः ।

आक्रान्ता भूरिभारेण ब्रह्माणं शरणं ययौ ॥ १०.१.१७

*Bhoomirdripta – nripavyaaja – daityaaneeka – shataayutaih,  
Aakraantaa bhooribhaare`na brhahmaanam sharanam yayau.  
10.1.17.*

The description of Prithvi\* going to Brahmaji is given here. Do not start asking where the people on earth were, when she went to Brahmaji! There is an Adhidevta\* who exists in the earth. Just as every house and village has a demi-god, the Prithvi also has one. All items contain a chetan shakti, which works on its own.

Laxmi is of two kinds. One is Krishi Laxmi\*, and the other is Svarna Laxmi\*. Krishi Laxmi is the immovable wealth, and Svarna Laxmi is the movable wealth. Bhudevi\* is the presiding deity of immovable wealth, and Laxmiji is the presiding deity of mobile wealth. The Lord Narayana is the husband and Master of both. Hence, nobody has the right to call himself

Shripati\* or Bhupati\*. The Lord is the only Shripati and Bhupati, and He abides in all hearts.

So, when Bhudevi wanted to go to Vaikunth, she felt embarrassed to go alone. She went to Brahma. Brahma is Narayana's son, but not born though Laxmidevi or Bhudevi. He manifested on the lotus that emerged from the naval of the Lord. Hence, he has equal affection for both wives of Narayana. Brahmaji identified with Bhudevi's sorrow, as though it was his own. He is the Devta of Rajoguna. He called Rudra – the Devta of Tamoguna - and other satvik\* Devtas. They all accompanied Prithvi to the banks of the Ksheersagar. They chanted the Purusha Sukta in praise of the Lord.

Purusha Sukta means the voice of the Lord. It describes the entire creation as the immense form of the Lord, and Narayana fills the entire creation. Everything in creation is an extension of the Lord.

Brahmaji went into a Samadhi while chanting the Purusha Sukta. The Lord appeared in the sky of his mind, and said, "You have all come to apprise Me of Bhudevi's sorrow. I am her husband, and I am fully aware of what troubles her. What kind of a husband is it, who is unaware of what troubles his wife, and a deputation is needed to inform him? I know everything in detail – पुरैव पुंसावधृतो धराज्वरः '*puraiva punsaavahrito dharaajvarah*'. "

When Brahmaji Samadhi broke, he told the Devtas, "The Lord will come. Everybody should go to Vraja and be born in the Yadu Vansha. The Lord will be born as Vasudev's son in a few days."

Now see what actually the burden which troubles the Mother Earth is. The daityabhaav\*, the arrogance of people, the tendencies of attachment and possessiveness, are the burdens. When people are identified by such factors, they become an unbearable burden on earth.

Brahmaji said, "Narayana will be accompanied by Sankarshan. Sankarshan will come as the elder brother, named Balram. The reason for this is that during the Ramavtar\*, Sankarshan came as Laxman, the younger brother of Rama. Shri Ramji would, at times, scold him, and Laxman never had his way. That is why he has said that he will come as the elder brother this time, and get an occasional chance to scold the Lord! The younger brother has to listen to the elder brother. Sankarshan wants to serve the Lord, whether it is as a younger brother or as an elder brother. Yogmaya\* will accompany Sankarshan, to serve the Lord.

All the Devtas were happy to hear this, and dispersed. Vasudevji's marriage with Devki took place at Vraja. Devki was given a great deal of wealth, as her dowry.

People used to give a lot of wealth to their daughters, when they got married. In those days, the sons were given the achala\* wealth, and the daughters

were given the chala\* wealth of the father. People had made this arrangement so that daughters would get an equal share from their fathers.

At the time of departure, Devki's cousin brother, Kansa (the son of Ugrasen, who was the King of Mathura) drove the bridal carriage, holding the reins of the horses. He did this to please Devki. Hundreds of golden carriages followed them.

Seeing this, the Devtas were worried. "If Kansa becomes so affectionate towards Devki and Vasudev, how will the Lord get a chance to kill him, when he is born as Devki's son? It should be announced that Kansa's death is destined to be at the hands of Devki's child." A celestial voice was heard, "O foolish Kansa! Who are you so fond of? The eighth child of this very Devki is destined to kill you!"

अस्यास्त्वामष्टमो गर्भो हन्ता यां वहसेऽबुध। १०.१.३४.

*Asyaastvaamastamo garbho hanta yaan vahase`abudha. 10.1.34.*

Note that the celestial voice did not say whether the child would be male or female. It simply confused Kansa by using the word 'child'.

It is also worth noting what the affection of a wicked man is like. Kansa left the reins as soon as he heard the akashvani. He caught Devki's plait, and dragged her off the chariot. He drew his sword to kill her, with no thought of the people on the streets of Mathura. His newly wedded sister had the auspicious thread tied round her wrist. She was leaving her home, to go to her new home. What would people say if she was killed? Just a moment earlier, Kansa was displaying so much brotherly affection! In a flash, he became her enemy! That is why Sant\* Tulsidas has said that the affection of a wicked person is never stable – खल की प्रीति यथा थिर नहीं '*khala kee preeti yathaa thir nahin*'. The latent tendencies of a wicked person always show up as soon as his selfish interest is thwarted. This is the sign of a selfish person.

However, see the miracle which took place at this point. Devki is held by her plait, and the sword is poised to cut her throat. Her husband, Vasudev, is standing there. However, she does not plead with Kansa, saying, "My brother, you have so much affection for me. Why do you want to kill me?" Nor does she ask Vasudev, "Where is your manliness? You have given me your love. I am your wife. Why don't you kill the man who wants to kill me?" Devki does not say a word. She is the personification of forbearance, forgiveness and peace! This is the kind of Mother the Lord chooses for His own birth. What is Devki? She is a combination of all positive forces – देवकी सर्वदेवता '*de`vkee sarvade`vtaa*'. She is the form of subtle, intellect – दृश्यते

त्वग्रया बुद्धया सूक्ष्मया सूक्ष्मदर्शिभिः ‘drishyate’ tagrayaa buddhyaa sooksmayaa sookshamadarshibhih.’ At the same level, what is Vasudev? He is pure Sattva\* - सत्त्वं विशुद्धं वसुदेशब्दितम् *sattvam vishuddham vasude`vashabditam`*.

That is why Vasudev praised Kansa with great courage, and said, “Kansaji, what are you trying to do? Great warriors all over the world praise your valor – श्लाघनीयगुणः शूरैः ‘shlaaghaneeyagunah shooraih’. If you kill this sister of yours, people will criticize you instead.

Now, there remains the topic of death, which comes to us all, one day. Why kill this poor lady for that? This world is like a dream. A person who is threatened by death should never hate any creature. Enmity is the cause of hatred. Anger is the cause for enmity, and aversion is the cause for anger. Arrogance, born out of nescience, allows it to enter our life. So, we should never harbor rancor.”

तस्मान्न कस्यचिद् द्रोहमाचरेत् स तथाविधः। १०.१.४४.

*Tasmaanna kasyachid drohamaachare`t sa tathaavidhah.*

10.1.44.

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj says, “When Vasudevji failed to convince Kansa by reasoning, he decided that the best thing to do, was to delay death, as far as possible.

मृत्युर्बुद्धिमतापोह्यो यावद् बुद्धिबलौदयम्। १०.१.४८

*Mrityurbuddhimataapohyo yaavad buddhibalodayam.*

10.1.48.

Vasudevji thought, “There are no children at present, and none may be born in future, either. It is not proper that I allow my wife to be killed for the sake of children who may never be born. It is also possible that Kansa dies before we get children; or that a child kills him first. Who knows what will happen in future? I should stop thinking about future possibilities, and save Devki.”

With these thoughts, Vasudevji said, “Kansaji, please do not worry. I will give you every child born through Devki’s womb.”

Vasudevji’s truthfulness was so well known that even a wicked person like Kansa had faith that he would never break his word. He let Devki go.

When Devki’s first baby was born, Vasudevji took him to Kansa. Kansa’s first reaction was, “Take this little one back. What can he do to me? When the eighth child is born, bring him to me.”

Naradji was concerned that Kansa was developing godly qualities. How could the Lord remove the burden of the earth? He went to Kansa, and deliberately misguided him towards ruthlessness. Kansa threw Devki and Vasudev into prison, and killed every child as soon as he was born. He also ordered the Police to imprison his father, King Ugrasen.

The Police, however, were firm. “Your word has no value, so long as Ugrasen is King,” they said. “We cannot imprison him at your orders.” Kansa got a similar response from the Army. Incensed, he went himself to the Court, with handcuffs and chains. He put them on the wrists and ankles of his father, in front of the whole court. Nobody dared to say a word. Kansa’s wickedness surpassed all limits.

स्वयं निगृह्य बुभुजे शूरसेनान् महाबलः । १०.१.६९.

*Svayam nigrahya bubhuje`shoorase`naan mahaabalah.*

10.1.69.

The word ‘svayam’ in this portion of the verse indicates that Kansa, himself, put his father, King Ugrasen, in chains, when he did not get any support from the Police. He imprisoned his father, and crowned himself as the King. Then he gathered all the demonic forces. Jarasandha got his daughters married to Kansa. Kansa developed strong friendships with other Asuras, like Banasur, Bhaumasur, Aghasur, Bakasur, and started to harass the Yaduvanshis.

The time for Kansa’s happiness was coming to an end. The person, who seeks to live by harassing others, is sure to be destroyed. Violence can never endure. It is incapable of giving fulfillment to anyone’s life.

If you think of how cruel Kansa was, you will realize that he killed six newly born infants of Devki! From the Adhyatmik angle, these six babies were the ‘shadvikar’. The Atman can be experienced only when the wrong tendencies are destroyed. So, after the death of the six wrong tendencies represented by Devki’s six babies, Balaramji came as the seventh baby. He said, “I will go ahead to see whether this place is suitable for the Lord, or not.”

The Lord told Yogmaya, “Balaramji has purified the place for Me. Now, I want you to shift him to Rohini’s womb, and after that I will come into Devki’s womb.”

When the Lord entered Devki’s womb, she became so radiant that it was as though a brilliant gem radiated from within a pot.

When Kansa saw Devki, he also felt that perhaps this was the child destined to kill him. He began to ponder upon how best to tackle the situation.

See how the Lord came into Devki's womb. Vasudev gave Devki 'manasik diksha'\*, and established the Lord in her womb. Vasudev gave the initiation mentally, and Devki received it mentally. However, where is the Lord not present? The Lord is everywhere, and so He is also in the womb.

This is the reason why Kansa's mind was filled with goodness, when he saw Devki. He said, "Oh, this is just a woman; she is my sister, and she is pregnant. People will spit on me if I kill her. I will be bitterly criticized. It is not proper to kill her just now."

Kansa began to await the birth of the baby – आस्ते प्रतीक्षंस्तज्जन्म 'aaste' prateekshanstajjanma'. He began to dream of Krishna all day, while sleeping, sitting, getting up, eating or drinking. His own shadow would frighten him. He was scared of the sound of his own footstep. He'd see Krishna before him, every moment of the day. He may have hated Krishna, but his life was filled with thoughts of Krishna. He was immersed in Krishna, he was lost in Krishna.

Now Brahma, Rudra, and the Devtas came to Kansa's prison, and began to praise the Lord in Devki's womb. This Garbhastuti\* in the Bhagwat is outstandingly beautiful.

सत्यव्रतं सत्यपरं त्रिसत्यं सत्यस्य योनिं निहितं च सत्ये।

सत्यस्य सत्यमृतयत्यनेत्रं सत्यात्मकं त्वां शरणं प्रपन्नाः॥ १०.२.२६

*Satyavratam satyaparam trisatyam satyasya yoni nihitam cha satye`*,

*Satyasya satyamritayatyane`tram satyaatmakam tvaam sharanam prapannaa. 10.2.26.*

The Devtas said, "Lord, Your vrat is Satya\*. Having entered the womb, please do not return, because of the discomfort. You have made a pledge. Please keep Your promise. Please don't leave half way. You never change Your pledge. Truth is Your way. You are the only Truth in all the three tenses, and in all the three worlds. You are the beginning of the earth, water, fire, wind and sky; and You abide in them. All these are Satya, but You are the Satya of Satya. We have come to seek Your protection."

The Devtas also said, "Lord, You take on the Avatar so that people can obtain Your form, worship You, and remember You.

सत्त्वं विशुद्धं श्रयते भवान् स्थितौ शरीरिणां श्रेयउपायनं वपुः। १०.२.३४

*Satvam vishuddham shrayate` bhavaan sthitau shareerinaam shre`yaupaayanam vapuh.*

*10.2.34.*

Lord, You take on a physical form for the sake of devotional worship, so that You can be worshipped through the Vedas, Kriyayoga\*, tapasya and Samadhi.

सत्त्वं न चेद्धातरिदं निजं भवेद् विज्ञानमज्ञानभिदापमार्जनम् । १०.२.३५.

*Satvām n ache`ddhaataridam nijam bhavē`d  
vignaanamagnaanabhidaapamaarjanam.  
10.2.35.*

Lord, if You did not manifest in an Avatar, how could it be proved that You exist? People would have gone on contemplating about Your existence. None would have seen You with their physical eyes.”

The Devtas bowed at the Lord’s feet, and told Devki, “Mother, the Lord has entered your womb. Now you need have no fear of Kansa. He is a short-lived guest on earth. Your son will protect the Yadu Vansha.”

The Devtas thus eulogized the Lord and Devki. When the time approached for the Lord to be born, Brahmaji and Shankarji told the other Devtas that it was time to leave. “We will follow you,” they said. The Devtas refused to leave, saying, “You will get some extra joy by staying back! We won’t leave without both of you.” They surrounded the delivery room, and refused to let Brahmaji and Shankarji out. What could the two do? They went ahead, and the Devtas followed them to heaven.

ब्राह्मेशानौ पुरोधाय देवाः प्रतिययुर्दिवम् । १०.२.४२.

*Brahme`shaanau purodhaaya de`vaah pratiyayurdivam.  
10.2.42.*

Shri Shukdevji said, “Parikshit, all the elements were like a fragrant, beautifully attired beauty. All the elements were purified. Prakriti beautified herself, to welcome the Lord. You can see the beauty of the original shlokas:

अथ सर्वगुणैतः कालः परमशोभनः ।  
यर्होवाजनजन्मक्षं शान्तर्क्षग्रहतारकम् ।  
दिशः प्रसेदुर्गगनं निर्मलोदुगणोदयम् ।  
मही मंगलभूयिष्ठपुरग्रामव्रजाकरा ।।  
नद्यः प्रसन्नसलिला हृदा जलरुहश्रियः ।  
द्विजालिकुलसंनादस्तबका वनराजयः ।।  
ववौ वायुः सुखस्पर्शः पुण्यगन्धवहः शुचिः ।  
अग्नयश्च द्विजातीनां शान्तास्तत्र समिन्धत ।। १०.३.१-४.

*Atha sarvagunope`tah kaalah paramashobhanah,  
Yarhye`vaajanajanmarksha shaantarkshagrahataarakam.  
Dishah prase`durgaganam nirmaloduganodayam,  
Mahee mangalabhooyishthapuragraamavrajaakaraa.  
Nadyah prasannasalilaa hridaa jalaruhshriyah,  
Dvijaalikulasannaadastavakaa vanaraajayah.  
Vavau vaayuh sukhasparshah punyagandhavahah shuchih,  
Agnayashcha dvijaateenaam shaantaastatra samindhata.  
10.3.1 – 4.*

A poet of Vraja has described what happened next:

सोई परिपूरन अपार पारब्रह्म राशि,  
देवकी के कोरे एकबार ही कुरे परो।  
*Soi paripooran apaara paarabrahma raashi,  
De`vkeke`kore e`kabaara hee kurai paro.*

The Lord manifested! Vasudevji saw Him, and was filled with ecstasy. However, how long can joy prevail, if one's hands and feet are bound in chains? Still, Vasudevji decided that he would donate ten thousand cows. He stood beside the Lord, and began to praise Him. Now, I will tell you about that tomorrow.

Om, Shantih! Shantih! Shantih!



## BHAGWATAMRIT

### Pravarchan IX

#### (Skandha X)

When the Lord manifests in the heart of a sadhak\*, his condition becomes very different. In the sadhana\*, it is called ‘chitta shuddhi’\*. The Lord comes as saguna sakar, to benefit the world, and favor His devotees. His coming also makes the world, and Nature, very different, very special.

This is why Shri Shukadevji Maharaj described how the elements became absolutely lucid and pleasant, when it was time for the Lord to appear. Not only was the external world purified and beautified, even the antahkaran\* was purified and made beautiful. All the four directions were tranquil. Stars sparkled in the sky. A gentle, fragrant breeze began to flow. Fires were bright, but gentle. The water in the rivers, ponds, and sea became clean and clear, even though it is always murky during the monsoon. All around, the world was filled with a glow of happiness. People’s hearts were felt free and joyful. The souls of the sadhus\* and Devtas were full of rapture. This description symbolizes that Mother Nature welcomed the Lord on earth, by displaying her best, as an offering to Him.

I had told you, yesterday that Devki represents the subtle intellect, Vasudev represents a pure mind, and the combination of these two results in the descent of the Lord Shri Krishna.

You are all aware that the good fortune of the Lord’s advent happens only after shravan\*. Similarly, the Bhadra\* follows the Shravan\*, and becomes bhadra\* - भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयामः ‘*bhadram karne`bhih shrunuyaamah`*. Bhadra is one whose presence gives pleasure. The Krishna paksha\* of the Bhadramaas\* carries the Lord’s own name. The Lord manifests in utter darkness.

The eighth tithi\* of the Krishna paksha is the middle day. Seven tithes come before it, and seven after it. The Lord was born on the tithi in-between. Why was the Lord born on the midnight of the eighth tithi? The reason is, because the Lord is born in the Chandra Vansha. Nisha\* is the principal wife of Chandrama, and Chandrama is the Nishanath\*. So, the brightness of the Lord appears at the peak hour of the night.

Apart from this, the Rohini nakshatra\* is the constellation of the unborn Brahma. Balaramji’s mother is also called Rohini. These are two reasons

why the Lord chose that to be the moment of His birth. There are many other significant points, but shortage of time does not permit elaboration.

Vasudev was the first person to see the Lord. He was amazed, and thought, “The Lord is born in my house! How wonderful! How amazing! The Lord is so tiny! No such baby has ever been born!”

तमद्भुतं बालकमम्बुजेक्षणं चतुर्भुजं शंखगदार्युदायुधम्।  
श्रीवत्सलक्ष्मं गलशोभिकौस्तुभं पीताम्बरं सान्द्रपयोदसौभगम्॥  
महार्हवैदूर्यकिरीटकुण्डलत्विषा परिष्वक्तसहस्रकुन्तलम्।  
उद्धामकांच्यङ्गकङ्कणादिभिर्विरोचमानं वसुदेव ऐक्षत॥ १०.३.९-१०

*Tamadbhutam baalakamambuje`kshanam chaturbhujam*  
*shankhagadaariayudham,*  
*Shrivatsalakshmam galashobhitkaustubham peetaambaram*  
*saandrapayodsaubhagam.*  
*Mahaarhavaidooryakireetakundalatvishaa parishvaktasahasrakuntalam,*  
*Uddamakaanchangadakankanaadibhirvirochamaanam vasude`va e`kshata.*  
10.3.9 – 10.

Vasudevji said, “This infant is wonderful! His open eyes are like lotuses. The eyes of new born babies are always closed. Other babies have two arms, but He has four! No doubt His four arms are busy protecting His devotees. They bestow the four purusharthas\*. The Lord, who enjoys all four states, has manifested before me. His four hands hold the Shankha\*, Chakra\*, Gada\* and Padma\*, and He is wearing all the ornaments.”

The word ‘ari’, which comes in the second half of the first shloka, indicates the Chakra. अरा सन्त्यस्य इति आरिः - चक्रः ‘*Araa santyasya iti ariti*’ – chakrah,’ containing sharp, serrated edges.

Vasudevji bowed his head and folded his hands, as he saw the Lord. He came to the conclusion that this is, indeed, the Lord, and began to eulogize Him.

When something wonderful and pristine is seen, the heart begins to appreciate it involuntarily. Perhaps I have told you what Naradji has said, “How will the Lord protect you, if you don’t recognize Him?” A Devta protects his form only when people are aware of him – अविदितं देवो नैनं भुनक्ति ‘*aviditamde`vo nainam bhunakti.*’

So, Vasudevji said, “Lord, I have recognized You! You are the actual cause of this world. You are not just the nimitta\*. You are also the stuff the world is made of. The specialty of that, which is made, is that it is present in its own action. Just as clay is present in a pot, as its upadana\*, the Lord is the

basic stuff this world is made of. Every grain of dust is filled with Him. The one, who makes, is the chetan\*, and that which is made, is the Sat\*. The indestructible form of Sat-Chid\* is eternal, and is the anandaghan\* Paramatma.

If you ask why the Lord can't be seen, the answer is that there are lots of things which exist, but cannot be seen. In the same way, the Lord is there, but our sense organs lack the capacity to see or recognize Him. When our indriyas\* are sharpened by Bhakti – Gnan, then they will succeed in seeing the presence of the Lord. Ordinary eyes can only see the gross.

Devki opened her eyes just when Vasudevji completed his stuti. She saw the Lord Narayana, and said, “You are the one who abides in our hearts, and lights the lamp of spirituality. It is amazing to think that the one in whom the entire creation exists, came into my womb! Who in the world will believe this? Intelligent people will refuse to accept that there is an Avatar at all! However, the Avatar of the Lord is before me – here and now! If there was a King who never went anywhere, nor allowed anyone to see him, how would people know whether he was dead or alive?”

So, the Lord is such that He becomes the Creation, He creates the Creation, and He sees the Creation. Then He manifests, and gives His devotees a vision of Himself. The Avatar is like the steps which enable our hearts to descend into the lucid lake of divinity – अवतरणं अवतारः ‘*avataranam avataarah*’. We can descend into the Brahmahrid\* only by means of these steps. The Lord, who is seated in our hearts, manifests, so that we can see Him with our sense organs, and antahkaran. How could anyone recognize the Lord if He did not manifest in an Avatar?

Devki also said, “Lord, I recognize You, but I am fearful that Kansa may come.”

The Lord said, “Both of you spent several births in severe asceticism, to attain Me, When I appeared before you to grant a boon, you asked for a son like Me. However, there is no one like Me in the world.

अदृष्ट्वान्यतमं लोके शीलौदार्यगुणैः समम्। १०.३.४१.

*Adrishtvaanyatam loke` sheelaudaaryagunaih samam. 10.3.41.*

So, how could I give you a son like Myself? Since I could not fulfill your demand, I met your request by coming thrice, as your son. A generous person who is unable to provide what his guest desires, compensates by giving the equivalent three times over. I showed you My chaturbhuj\* form, to remind you of your past births.”

The Lord then inspired Vasudevji and Devki to take Him to Gokul.

The fact is that Gokul is fulfilled only when the Lord enters it. The Lord is not meant to be kept hidden behind the indriyas. He is not meant to be only the subject of meditation. He is meant to play with our sense organs. That is why the changing of the Parabrahma Paramatma\* into a seemingly ordinary person took place.

The Lord started His Leela as soon as Vasudevji decided to take Him to Gokul. He came into Vasudevji's lap, and the chains fell off him. How is it possible that a person be bound by worldly chains, when he has the Lord in his lap? The handcuffs and chains opened automatically and so did the prison gates.

When Vasudevji began to walk towards Gokul, the Lord's vimukhjana-mohini Maya\* appeared in Mathura. A slight drizzle of rain started, prompting the people sleeping outdoors to pick up their beds, and go indoors. The streets were empty, and the Lord passed out of the city. The Lord Shesha protected Him from the drizzle, with his hoods.

When Yamunaji\* saw this, she thought, "This serpent is entering my waters. I already have one serpent living in my waters – and now one more is coming. What can I do to stop him?" She increased her flow, thinking, "I will wash him away with the force of the current." Then she saw the Lord, and thought, "If I do anything impudent, how will the Lord marry me?"

As you know, the Lord will, later on, marry Kalindiji\*. She is His sweetheart even at Vraja, and becomes His fourth principal Queen when she flows into the sea and reaches Dwarka.

So, Kalindi bared her heart to the Lord. She dried up in such a way that the water was just knee deep in some places, thigh deep in some places, and just up to the ankles in some places. Vasudevji crossed the river quite easily. When he reached Gokul, the Lord's swajana-mohini Maya induced all the doors of Nanda Bhavan\* to open. Yashoda Maiya\* went into a deep sleep, and so did all the people in Gokul.

You will not find a God like this in any other religious sect; a God who comes, Himself, into the house of one who sleeps. The Lord, who comes into the house of a sleeping person, is called saguna sakar, a compassionate Lord. He is entering a house which has no japa, no dhyana, no samadhi, and no sadhan. He is coming to someone who is fast asleep!

Vasudevji placed the Lord near Yashoda Maiya, and picked up Maya, who slept beside her, and took Maya back to Mathura. The Lord thought to Himself, "My devotee is leaving Me, and taking My Maya instead! And the one to whom I have come, sleeps unconcerned. There is no welcome for Me. How strange that My coming evokes no reaction at all!"

So, the Lord began to cry! His crying woke Yashoda Maiya, but I will speak of this later. First, let us go to Mathura with Vasudevji.

When Vasudevji returned to Kansa's prison with Maya, do you know what happened? When the Lord had come into his lap, all his shackles had opened miraculously, but as soon as he returned with Maya, he was shackled again.

As soon as Vasudevji was shackled, Maya began to cry. The guards woke up and informed Kansa. Kansa was just waiting for this news. He rushed, bare footed, and bare headed, with a naked sword in his hand, to the prison. Seeing him, Devki thought, "My son has been saved by this little baby girl. It is only proper that I try to protect her, if I can." She pleaded with Kansa, to spare the little one, but he was not the type who would bother about piteous appeals! He picked up Maya Devi\*, and tried to smash her on a rock. Instead of falling, Maya Devi rose up into the sky. Later on, she became famous as the Vindhyavasini Devi.

Kansa was embarrassed. He began, at first, to speak of Vedanta, to Devki-Vasudev, saying, "Who kills whom? The Atma is eternal, everlasting, ever unattached, and it never dies. I have, however, been very unjust to you. Please forgive me."

Kansa's thinking was lofty, while he was in the presence of Vasudev-Devki. It changed as soon as he returned to his own house, and the company of his wicked Ministers. His crooked advisers said, "Sir, since the Devi told you that the one who will kill you is born, isn't it better that we kill all small children?" Kansa accepted their advice, and told them to go ahead. Injustice, however, is short-lived. Only those who are coming rapidly closer to death, choose untruth, injustice and cheating. Ultimately, they destroy themselves. Now, come to Nandababa's house in Gokul. When the baby began to cry, Yashoda woke up and so did her attendants. They were overjoyed to see the baby. The words poured out, नन्दके आनन्द भयो "Nanda ke` ananda bhayo". When Nandababa heard these words, and learnt that a son had been born, he was filled with immeasurable joy.

One principle is proved here – the Lord is not necessarily the son of the person through whom He takes birth. The Lord's status as a child is through the feeling of paternal/maternal love for Him. Similarly, those who love Him as their Master, friend, or sweetheart, obtain Him as their Master, friend, or sweetheart. The Lord is obtained through deep feeling. In the Gita, He has vowed – ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् 'ye` yathaa maam prapadyante` taanstathaiva bhajamyaham'. That is why Shri Shukadevji Maharaj says,

नन्दस्त्वात्मज उत्पन्ने जाताह्लादो महामनाः । १०.५.१

*Nandastvaatmaja utpanne` jaataahlaado mahaamanaah.*

### 10.5.1.

You see, Vasudev-Devki were unable to develop a firm conviction that the Lord was their son, because He had appeared before them in His four-armed form. They felt diffident about considering the four-armed Lord their son. In Nanda-Yashoda's house, however, the Lord came as an ordinary baby, and they were fully convinced that He is their little son.

As a matter of fact, in our Vaishnav Sampradaya\*, it is believed that two Krishnas manifested – one in the prison at Mathura, and one at Yashoda Maiya's house. When Vasudevji took his Krishna to Gokul, He merged into His other form, which had manifested in Gokul. The Vallabh Sampradaya and the Chaitanya Sampradaya accept this theory, but none of the others accept it.

So, Nandababa believed totally that the Lord was his son. The Vaishnavas in South India believe that the Shri Krishna born in the prison, refused to leave His mother, Devki, and go to Gokul. For twelve years, He remained with her, unknown to others. Mother Devki would breast-feed Him, feed Him, and pamper Him. Devki's heart would have been broken, had she known that her darling child was not with her. This is written in the Tamil Bhagwat. Whatever the case may be, when Nandababa learnt that a son was born, he immediately sent for Brahmins, who were well versed with the Vedas. He asked them to undertake all the rituals. Our preachers in Vraja\* describe this in great detail. They dance, jump, laugh, and play with joy, as they narrate this, spending two or three hours on this episode.

The learned Brahmins chanted the Svasti Vaachan\*. Nandababa opened up his treasury in elation, and gave daan\* with all generosity. It is an indication of a lacking of joy, when a person remains tight-fisted on a happy occasion. Happiness relaxes all tensions and brings magnanimity.

Nandababa began to donate whatever the Brahmins desired. He gave silver to those who asked for silver; gold to those who wanted gold; pearls and diamonds to those who wanted these. Some people felt that they had foolishly asked for too little. They threw away what they had taken, and joined the queue again, to ask for something of greater value.

People flocked to Nandababa, to procure whatever they wanted, since Nandababa was giving everybody whatever they asked for. He made little mounds of til\*, covered them with jewel studded gold, and donated them. He donated cows in large numbers.

Jeev Goswami says that Nandababa donated two million cows, on this happy occasion. Shridhar Swami says he donated two hundred thousand. Thus, although the Mahatmas give different figures, the fact remains that

Nandababa was open handed in giving, and all Vraja was filled with joy and exuberance. The Panegyrists sang praises, and others did stuti.

They said that Nandababa noticed that Rohiniji was not participating in the celebrations. He went to her and said, “Lala\* is yours! Why do you sit all alone? Come – celebrate the birth of your son!” Rohiniji used to follow the social custom of not dressing up, or participating in celebrations, without her husband. On this occasion, however, she did participate, at Nandababa’s urging.

Laxmiji is where the Lord is, so she left Vaikunth, and spread herself all over Vraja – रमाक्रीडमभूत्रप ‘*ramaakreedamabhoonnripa*’.

Laxmiji rides on an ‘ullu’\*, when she goes alone to people. Her mount is an owl, which indicates that when she goes unaccompanied by the Lord, she makes a fool of them, and comes back. When she is accompanied by the Lord, they travel on the Garuda, and she gives – and gets – great joy.

After the festivities were over, Nandababa felt that Kansa should also be pampered with gifts. He went to Mathura to pay the Annual taxes, putting up camp there, for some days. After paying his taxes, he went to meet Vasudevji.

This meeting between Nanda and Vasudevji is described beautifully in the Bhagwat. Vasudevji never allowed Nanda to see his sorrow, that so many sons had been killed, his daughter had flown away, and they had been put into prison by Kansa. He was happy for Nandababa, and said, ‘Nandaji, you were disheartened that you did not have a child for so many years. It is God’s Grace that you now have a son. A grihastha\* is happy, when his whole family is happy – he can never be happy selfishly. So, we are all extremely happy at your good fortune.’

Nandababa, however, did not speak of his own happiness. He said, ‘Vasudevji, I know that you were put into prison, your sons were killed, and your daughter flew into the sky. We share your sorrow.’

This episode has something important to teach. It is not proper to talk only about ourselves, when we meet people. Our talk should be suited to the condition of the person we talk to. That is why Nandababa saw Vasudevji’s sorrow, and Vasudevji saw Nandababa’s joy.

Then Vasudevji said, “Nandaji, please return as quickly as possible, because many upheavals are happening at Gokul.”

Nandababa knew that Vasudevji was a man of truth, so what he said could never be false. The Yoga Darshan states that if Truth is established in the life of a person, his words come true. He does not need to try to make his predictions come true – सत्यप्रतिष्ठायां क्रियाफलाश्रयत्वम् ‘*satyapratishthaayaam*

*kriyaafalaashrayatvam.*’ The words of a truthful man are always true, and proved to be right.

Nandababa felt very anxious, when he heard these words. He immediately broke camp and headed for home. It is natural for a man of truth to surrender to the Lord, when he senses danger. Just the memory of the Lord protects us from all danger – हरिः स्मृतिः सर्वविपद्विमोक्षणम् ‘*harismriti sarvavipadavimokshanam.*’

Putana\*, the demoness, arrived at Vraja. She had been sent by Kansa. You must have heard this episode before. Shri Vallabhacharya Maharaj says that Putana represents Avidya.

अविद्या पूतना नष्टा गन्धमात्रावशेषिता ।

*Avidyaa pootana nashtaa gandhamaatraavashe`shitaa.*

She kidnaps pure hearted infants, which is why she is called ‘Putana’ – पूतनापि नयति ‘*pootaanapi nayati*’. Putana is an astrological sign which affects infants, according to the descriptions in the scriptures. The Baal Samhita describes the ritual for negating its effect.

Putana was a demoness by birth. She had a terrible nature. She would kill infants by drinking their blood. Kansa sent her to Gokul. Once there, she donned a beautiful appearance, as lovely as Laxmi. She wore malati\* flowers in her hair, and carried a lotus in her hand, when she entered Gokul. The Lord prompted her to enter no other house, but His, so that no other baby would be harmed. Those who saw her were bewitched by her beauty. Nobody stopped her from going into Nandababa’s house.

As soon as she entered, Putana saw the tiny Lord, Shyamsunder\*, sleeping on the bed. He had not yet teethed. Mother Rohini sat on one side, and Yashoda Maiya on the other side of His bed. Both were looking at Him with deep happiness.

Putana also felt a spurt of happiness when she saw this scene, but she had come with a terrible intention. She said, “Oh – have you never had children? This baby is hungry, and both of you are just sitting there, looking at him!” Saying this, she quickly lifted the Lord onto her lap. Yashoda Maiya was delighted that this beautiful stranger had so much love for her son. A mother feels goodwill for those who show goodwill to her children.

The Lord shut His eyes, when Putana lifted Him onto her lap. Shri Harisuri has written a book called ‘Hari Bhaktirasayan’, which gives a dozen imagines reasons for the Lord’s shutting His eyes at this point. You can enjoy some of them.



The Lord thought, “Putana has no good deeds to her credit in this lifetime. Let Me check if she has any in a past life.” The Lord shut His eyes to meditate upon this. Another reason could be that the Lord felt, “Putana has come as a Mother, to feed Me, but has dressed up like a wife, so I should not see her face.” A third reason, “Putana deserves neither the Dakshinayan\* nor Uttarayan\* path after her death”, so He shut both His eyes. A fourth interpretation is that the Lord thought, “I had come to Vraja to have curds, milk and butter; but now I will have to drink poison, instead. So, it’s best I shut My eyes.”

Apart from Shri Harisuri, Shri Vallabhacharya has given five or six imaginary reasons, and Shri Jeeva Goswami has imagined another six or seven. The Mahatmas thus narrate about twenty or twenty five reasons for the Lord’s shutting His eyes. The Lord, however, is just a baby, and it is natural for a baby to shut his eyes.

When Putana pushed her poisoned nipple into the mouth of the Lord, He began to suckle lustily. A baby has no inkling about who is good, and who is bad. It is natural for a baby to start drinking, no matter who feeds him. Putana became frantic, when the Lord began to suck her life, and cried out, “Leave me – मुंच मुंच! ‘*Muncha! Muncha!*’”

The mantra पूतने मुंच मुंच “*putane` muncha muncha*” is used to free a person ensnared by the spirit of Putana.

Hence, when this baby grabbed Putana, she began to chant this mantra, saying, “Child! Leave me! Leave me! Muncha – muncha!” But the Lord said, “Putana, I do know how to catch people, but I do not know how to let them go. I have never left anyone I caught. How can I leave you?”

Then Putana fell dead, and her original, massive form returned. Preachers say that she was terrible to look at, and so huge that her limbs stretched far and wide. The area where her haath\* fell, came to be called Hathras. The area where her alaks\* fell, became Aligarh, and the area where her garal\* fell, became Agra. Her heavy body brought down the trees in an area of six kosas\*, as she fell.

When the Gopis saw the huge form of Putana lying on the ground, and the Lord playing happily on her chest, they went to pick Him, and bring Him down, without any vestige of fear. Then they began to chant the Lord’s names, to protect their Lala. First, they applied the dust from the hooves of cows on Him, and then bathed Him with the cows’ urine. Then they put a tilak\* of cow dung on His forehead, and swung a cow’s tail over Him, in a circle. When they finished these rituals of protection, it dawned on them that they had forgotten to purify themselves (after having touched the corpse of Putana) before doing all the purification mantras. So they purified

themselves by touching water and chanting purification mantras, and then they repeated all the rituals to protect the baby Shri Krishna.

Yashoda Maiya simply couldn't believe that her baby was alive and unharmed. She stood in a stupor, on one side. Seeing her condition, the Gopis asked, "Maiya, have you had a dream? Your Lala hasn't gone anywhere – come and see for yourself." They laid Him on His bed, and Maiya saw Him playing happily, as usual. Maiya said, "Even now, I can hardly believe that the demoness has not cast some spell." She relaxed only after she lifted Him onto her lap, and He began to suckle her hungrily. Then she took Him around, placing Him in the lap of each Gopi, and saying that it was her blessing which had protected her Lala.

Now, give your attention to this episode, for it is an episode of the Lord's Grace. A point to be considered is that when the Lord Graces even a demoness who came to give Him poison, what would He bestow upon the cows and milkmaids, who feed Him so lovingly? Then the position of His mother is supreme! It would not be at all surprising if the Lord gave Himself to her forever. Can anyone calculate the blessings His mother would obtain, when even Putana obtained salvations? The fact is that the greatness of a mother's love is beyond description.

Another point to be considered is that when even Putana was granted liberation, what will the Lord grant to those who lovingly consider Him their beloved child? The Lord was not bothered by the fact that Putana was a demoness who had come to kill Him. He focused only upon the fact that she had fed Him, the way a mother breast feeds her baby. He ignored the poison, and saw motherly love.

Even today, the Lord can undoubtedly grant salvation to anyone who has feelings for Him – whatever the nature of the feeling may be. Even those who hate Him can receive salvation.

After Putana, came Shakatasura\*. It was the day of the Lord's astrological birth sign, and it was the day He turned on His side for the first time. Yashoda Maiya was busy with all the good tasks, after bidding farewell to the Brahmins. She placed her Lala under a cart, and began to greet her guests. Lala saw that while others were being welcomed, He was not given even a proper place to sleep! "I have been placed under a cart; an inanimate object has been placed above Me!"

To place an inanimate object above the animate is the same as placing money above humans. A person is always greater than an object – objects are not more important than people. The animate is greater than the inanimate. The material should not be placed above the human.

But that day, the inanimate was placed above the animate, and large pots containing milk, curds, butter and ghee\* were placed on the cart. My dear, is any substance sweeter than the Lord, that it should be placed over Him? So, Yashoda's Lal\* cried, and said, "What is happening here?" He just touched the cart with His lotus like feet. He did not become immense, like the Trivikram\*, nor hard like the Narasimha. He retained His tender, infant form, with the same soft feet. Still, the cart toppled over with the mere touch of His feet. All the milk, curd, butter and ghee spilled on the ground. This caused everybody to turn away from everything else, and look at the little Lala who had overturned the heavily laden cart. This is called 'nirodh'\*. This is why Shri Vallabhacharya Maharaj calls the tenth Skandha of the Bhagwat, the Nirodh Skandha.

कस्य निरोधः ? भक्तस्य ।

कस्मिन् निरोधः ? भगवति ।

केन निरोधः ? भगवता ।

*Kasya nirodhah? Bhaktasya.*

*Kasmin nirodhah? Bhagavati.*

*Ke`na nirodha? Bhagavataa.*

The meaning of this is: Who does nirodh apply to? It applies to the Bhakta. Where is nirodh? In the Lord. Who does the nirodh? The Lord, Himself, does it. His Leelas are such that the minds of His devotees are drawn irresistibly towards Him.

Yashoda Maiya felt that it was the affect of some malevolent stars. She picked up her darling child, who was crying, and began to feed Him. Nandababa told the Brahmins to undertake some rituals, and bless the little Lala. He had faith that the blessings of Brahmins are never in vain.

One day, Yashoda Maiya had her Lala in her lap. Suddenly, she felt that He was too heavy for her. She wondered how her little one suddenly felt so heavy. Unable to hold Him any longer, she placed Him on the ground, returning to her chores, and thinking about the Lord.

A great whirlwind arose just then, and lifted Yashoda Nandan\* high into the air. The Lord would let Trinavarta\* lift Him as high as he wished, but would not let him move in the direction of Kansa. Then, Nanda Nandan\* caught hold of Trinavarta's neck, and hung upon it. Trinavarta began to wonder what this weight was. He thought that perhaps it is a rock from the Neelgiri Mountain, which was heavier than him. The Lord said, "I am a little child, I do not know anybody. I just catch the neck of whoever picks Me up. If this

causes your death, so be it! It is not My fault. I am doing what any child would do.”

Shri Vallabhacharyaji Maharaj has described Trinavarta as a great demon. He states that it was lust personified, who came as the wind, to swoop up Shri Krishna, and carry Him off.

So, when Trinavarta thought that he had accidentally picked up a rock, he fell. He landed on a rock close to the Eastern entrance of Nanda Bhavan, and died.

The Gopis ran to lift the child. They were convinced that the blessings of the Brahmins had protected their Lala. The wicked had been killed by his own wickedness, and their innocent little Lala had been protected.

Now Yashoda Maiya could not bear to leave her Lala for a minute. One day, she placed Him on her lap, and began to feed Him. To save her Lala even the slightest effort, she pushed her nipple into His mouth, and her milk began to flow.

एकदार्भकमादाय स्वाङ्कमारोप्य भामिनी ।

प्रस्नुतं पाययामास स्तनं स्नेहपरिप्लुता ॥ १०.७.३४.

*E`kdaarbhakamaadaaya svaankamaaropaya bhaaminee,*

*Prasnutam paayayaamaasa stanam sne`hpariplutaa.*

10.7.34.

A mother’s love is unique – not to be found anywhere else in the world. It is her intangible love which flows forth in the form of milk. Love has no physical form. It is an intangible emotion which resides in the heart. In a mother’s heart, however, it takes on the tangible form of milk, and enters the mouth of her baby. A baby is a piece of the mother’s heart. If, however, she denies her milk to her child, how can she expect that he will be obedient, or protect the culture?

When Yashoda Maiya’s milk continued to flow into Lala’s mouth, she felt anxious lest He drink too much, and get indigestion. She tried to make Him smile. She began to smile at Him, and kiss His face. The Lord thought, “Now My Mother is reluctant to feed Me any more.” He yawned. Maiya saw the three worlds in the Lord’s mouth. Her head began to reel. The Lord told her, “Maiya, your milk is not drunk by just Me. The whole world is drinking your milk. Look into My mouth – you will see the entire world.”

विश्वं विभागि पयसोऽस्य न केवलोऽहम्,

अस्माददर्शि हरिणा किमु विश्वमास्ये ।

*Vishvam vibhaagi payasoasya na ke`valoaham,*

*Asmaadadashi harinaa kimu vishvamaaste`.*

The Lord displayed the whole world in His mouth, but Maiya said, “My little one is sleeping in my lap. He has a tiny mouth, and a waist which is hardly bigger than my fist. How is it possible that I see the world in his little stomach? My wicked eyes are playing tricks, and deluding me. It is simply my drishti-srishti\*, and not srishti-drishti\*”. With these thoughts, Maiya shut her eyes.

You see, the Lord’s Yoga Maya tries repeatedly, to show her power and magnificence, but the strength of the devotees’ love renders her efforts unsuccessful. Yashoda Maiya is astonished to see all this, but it does not really affect her in any way.

When the Lord gave Yashoda Maiya a glimpse of His Creation, in His mouth, she saw His immense form. Now, the name and the form always go together. So, Vasudevji was inspired to organize the namakaran sanskar\*, for his son at Gokul. These religious sanskars are required to bring culture and righteousness into our lives. This is the reason why so much importance has been given to the different rituals done on different occasions in our lives. Even today, they are undertaken in the homes of the cultured. The sanskars are many, like the garbhadhan\* sanskar, the punsavan\* sanskar, the seemantopanayan\* sanskar, the jatakarma\* sanskar, etc. etc. It is only by these sanskars that the vikaras\* are overcome.

Prompted by Vasudevji, Shri Gargacharyaji Maharaj came to Gokul, with the intention of undertaking the namakaran sanskar of Nanda Nandan. He was a highly learned ascetic. As soon as Nandababa saw him, he said, “Shri Gargacharyaji’s coming to our house is just as though the Lord has come!” He welcomed Gargacharyaji with full respect, and then said, “Sir, you are a great astrologer. Please give a suitable name to my son.”

Gargacharyaji replied, “You see, Nandaji, I am the purohit of the Yaduvanshis. If I undertake the naming ceremony publicly, it will arouse suspicion in the mind of the evil Kansa. He will suspect that your son is actually the child of Vasudevji. पापी सर्वत्र पापमाशङ्कते। ‘*Paapi sarvatra paapamaashankate`*’ - it is the nature of a wicked person to suspect others of being wicked. Even if there is nothing wrong, the wickedness in the heart clouds his thinking and he begins to see wickedness everywhere.”

Nandababa immediately understood the implication, and said, “You desire to undertake the ceremony secretly, to ensure that Kansa does not come to hear of it. That is fine. Our cowshed is a place where no outsider comes. Come – let us go and sit there. We do not even need to purify the area by plastering diluted cow dung. Please do not bother about elaborate ritualism. The cows

are all Devtas, superior to all other demi-gods. Please, just do the Svasti Vaachan there, and then the namakaran sanskar.”

Gargacharyaji Maharaj did the ritual. He named the elder brother Balaram. He also gave him the name Sankarshan and a few other names as well. For the younger brother, he gave the names Vasudev\*, Krishna, and others.

Everyone at home rejoiced. Rohini and Yashoda began to pamper their sons in every way. Soon, both brothers learnt to crawl on all fours. They would crawl into the pile of cow dung, play with cow dung and cow urine! Their bodies would be covered with these substances, but their mothers would laughingly pick them up. They would never say – “Go and bathe, first. Then we will take you in our laps.” Vatsalya\* is defined by the mother taking pleasure in the flaws of the one dependent on her.

आश्रितजनदोषभोग्यतापादनम् वात्सल्यम्।

*Aashritajanadoshabhogyataapaadanam vaatsalyam.*

It is said that when Surdasji\* met Shri Vallabhacharya, he started to sing his famous song – मो सम कौन कुटिल खल कामी ‘*mo sama kaun kutil khala kaami*’\*. Hearing this, Shri Vallabhacharya Maharaj said, “Surdas, why are you so full of woe? Sing some other song.”

Surdasji asked, “Sir, what should I sing?”

Shri Vallabhacharyaji Maharaj said, “Sing about the Leela of the Lord.”

Surdasji’s whole tone changed, and he began to sing joyfully.

सोभित कर नवनीत लिये।

घुटुरुवन चलत स्याम मनि आँगन, मुख दधि लेप किये।।

‘*Sobhita kara navaneeta liye*’,

*Ghuturuvana chalata syaam mani aangana, mukha dadhi le`pa kiye`.*’

This Leela sung by Surdasji is not imagined. It is a factual Leela. Surdasji was physically blind, but he had the vision of the Lord’s Leelas with his mind’s eye, and he described them. The saints - who are also poets – have been seeing and describing the innumerable Leelas of the Lord.

Shri Krishna started doing all kinds of mischief at home. He would eat up the butter, when Maiya was busy elsewhere. Maiya would see the butter on His face and hands, and ask, “What have you been up to?” Shri Krishna would answer, “Maiya, My hand began to burn because of the red stone you make Me wear. I put My hand into the butter to cool it.” Maiya would say, “Very well, you put your hand in the pot of butter to cool it. But how is the butter smeared on your mouth?” The Lord would reply, “A fly sat on My

lips. The butter was smeared when I brushed it off with My hand.” Maiya knew perfectly well what had happened. She would just smile.

You see, we are talking about the Baal\* Leela. It shows how little children laugh, play, and talk at home. You may keep meditating on your Ishwara, but the nirakar\*, nirvikar\*, nirguna\*, nirdharmak\* Lord will not enter your heart. However, if you see the Lord as a child, you will obtain so much pleasure that all worldly thoughts and considerations will be forgotten.

Shri Krishna’s Baal Leela then extended beyond His home. He started to go to the homes of other Gopis, and indulge in similar pranks. Although the Gopis desired Him eagerly, they would land up at Nanda Bhavan, complaining to Yashoda Maiya, about all the mischief of her Lala. Even as they complained, their eyes would rest lovingly upon Shri Krishna. Mother Yashoda would observe all this, understand how matters stood, and smile.

You see, when you listen to the Leela of the Lord, you should not try to evaluate the right and wrong by worldly standards. These Leelas are meant to help us meditate upon the Lord. Shri Shukadevji Maharaj did not speak about the truth and falsehood, when he described the Lord’s Leelas. He just described how the Gopis would complain to Yashoda. He did not, on his own, speak about any incident of stealing. He restricted himself to describing the Gopis’ allegations. He said, “I have only seen the Gopis complaining. Only they knew how true or false their words were. I know nothing about it.”

The mother, who loves her child so deeply, also gets annoyed with him at times. However, her anger is aroused only when he does anything which can harm him in any way.

Many such occasions came to Yashoda. One day, Shri Krishna ate some mud. The gwaal baal\* told Yashoda Maiya. She went to Him at once, catching His right hand with her left hand, and brandishing a cane in her right hand. She demanded, ‘Well, Lala! Have you eaten mud?’

कस्मान्मृदमदान्तात्मन् भवान् भक्षितवान् रहः ।

वदन्ति तावका ह्येते कुमारास्तेऽग्रजोऽप्ययम् ।। १०.८.३४

*Kasmaanmridamadaantaatman bhavaan bhakshitavaan rahah,*

*Vadanti taavakaa hye`te`kumaaraaste`agrajoppayam.*

10.8.34.

Shri Krishna denied having eaten mud. Maiya told Him that all His friends said that He had eaten some. Shri Krishna said that they were all telling lies. Maiya told Him that even Dau Dada\* said so, and Shri Krishna reiterated that they were all telling lies. “Maiya, I do not see that I ate anything,

because nothing exists but Me. The jeeva is ignorant. So what, if they think I have eaten? If you believe that they are speaking the truth, look into My mouth –

नाहं भक्षितवानम्ब सर्वे मिथ्याभिर्शंसिनः ।

यदि सत्यगिरस्तर्हि समक्षं पश्य मे मुखम् ॥ १०.८.३५

*Naaham bhakshitavaanamba sarve`mithyaabhishansinah,*

*Yadi satyagirastarhi samaksham pashay me`mukham.*

10.8.35.”

The cleverness behind Shri Krishna’s words was that Maiya had shut her eyes, when she had looked into His mouth earlier, and would do the same again. However, this time Maiya did not close her eyes. So, she saw the entire Creation in Shri Krishna’s little mouth, when He opened it wide. She dropped her cane, and said, “Just see – what is all this in my Laala’s mouth? Am I seeing a dream? Is this an illusion, or is my Lala, Ishwara?”

Now Shri Krishna thought, “If Maiya thinks that I am Ishwara, she won’t take Me onto her lap, or feed Me. She will place Me on a throne, and do arti\*.” So, He quickly shut His mouth, and asked, “Maiya, are you My Maiya or not?”

Maiya replied, “Yes, son, I am only your Maiya,” and she took Him into her lap. Shri Shukadevji Maharaj says,

त्रय्या चोपनिषद्भिश्च सांख्योगैश्च सात्वतैः ।

उपगीयमानमाहात्म्यं हरिं सामन्यतात्मजम् ॥ १०.८.४५.

*Tryya chopanishadbhishcha saankhyogaishcha saatvataih,*

*Upageeyamaanamahaatmyam harim saamanyataatmajam.*

10.8.45.

“Parikshit, see the good fortune of Yashoda Maiya. She loves and pampers, as her child, the Lord who is praised by all the Vedas, and Shastras.

At this point, Raja Parikshit asked, “Sir, please tell me how did Nanda-Yashoda get such good fortune. What vrat or tapa did they undertake, that the Lord, Himself, came as their son?”

Now see, where can we obtain the Lord? We obtain Him in the lap of our hearts. He is as far from us as we think Him to be, and as close as we feel Him to be. The fact that the Lord is neither far nor near – He is everywhere, and hungry for emotion. He meets us according to our feelings for Him.

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj told Parikshit that Brahmaji told Dronavasus to go to the Earth, with his wife Dhara\*. Dronavasus prayed, “Sir, let us always



have love for the Lord, when we are born on Earth. Please let us have the opportunity to love Him.” It is the same Dronavasudha and Dhara, who became Nanda-Yashoda. They reside permanently in the Land of the Lord, in the form of raagatmika bhakti\*, but the Lord manifested as an ordinary child, and received their love.

So, Nanda-Yashoda did not obtain the Lord by any vrata or worship. They obtained Him by the blessings of a Mahapurush\*. Prajapati blessed them, saying, “The Lord will be your son”, and the Lord became their son.

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj said, “Parikshit, God can be obtained by the blessings of Mahatmas, but He cannot be obtained through japa, tapa, or vrata. You are amazed at the episode of Maiya’s picking up a cane, to make the Lord spit out the mud out of His mouth, but – just see – one day Maiya tied the Lord to an ukhal\*.

एकदा गृहदासीषु यशोदा नन्दगेहिनी ।  
कर्मन्तरनियुक्तासु निर्ममन्थ स्वयं दधि ।।  
यानि यानीह गीतानि तद्बालचरितानि च ।  
दधिनिर्मन्थने काले स्मरन्ती तान्यगायत ।।  
क्षौमं वासः पृथुकटितटे विभ्रती सूत्रनद्धं  
पुत्रस्नेहस्नुतकुचयुगं जातकम्पं च सुभूः ।  
रज्ज्वाकर्षश्रमभुजचलत्कङ्कणौ कुण्डले च  
स्विन्नं वक्त्रं कबरविगलन्मालती निर्ममन्थ ।। १०.९.१-३

*E`kadaa grihadaaseeshu Yashodaa nandage`hinee,  
Karmaantaraniyuktaasu nirmamantha svayam dadhi.  
Yaani yaaneeha geetaani tadbaalacharitaani cha,  
Dadhinirmanthane` kale` smarantee taanyagaayata.  
Kshaumam vaasah prithukatitete` vibhratee sootranaddham,  
Putrasne`hasnutakuchayugam jaatakampam cha subhrooh.  
Rajjvaakarshramabhujachalatkankanau kundale` cha,  
Svinnam vaktram kabaravigalanmaalatee nirmamantha. 10.9. 1-3*

How deep is the love of a mother, and how can she leave this piece of her heart, to servants? Yashoda Maiya instructed her servants to attend to various tasks, including the ritual worship of Indra, and she began to churn the curd, for her Lala. While she churned, she thought of His antics – “just see how he asked for the moon to play with, like a ball! How obstinate he became that day!” Thus, Maiya would talk about His virtues, cherish His memory in her mind, and use her hands to churn curds to produce butter for Him to eat.

Describing the scene, Shri Shukadevji Maharaj said that Maiya was wearing a silken garment, with a girdle round her waist. There were pots of different shapes and sizes around her, as she sat churning the curd. Her exertions caused the jasmine flowers in her hair to fall, and beads of perspiration appeared on her face.

We cannot have a vision of the Lord, until we have a vision like this, of His devotee. The Lord hovers round His devotees. I ask you a straight question – do you believe that there is, in this world, at least one person who has had a vision of the Lord? If you believe that no body at all has seen the Lord, then you will not be able to believe that you can see Him either. If you are convinced that nobody has attained Him, well – what special qualities do you have, which would qualify you to obtain His vision?

After seeing Yashoda Maiya, Shri Shukadevji Maharaj saw the Lord sleeping on the bed. The Gopis had come at night, so Yashoda Maiya told them to watch over her Lala, while she went to set the curd. When we set the curd ourselves, we take care to ensure that it does not become sour. It is important to see how rich the milk is, and the quality of the curd used to make it set. It is not proper to use just any curd, to set the milk. The curd used should be pure, the milk should be pure, and our hands should be pure – only then does the curd become tasty.

So, when Yashoda Maiya went to set the curd, Shri Krishna wanted the Gopis to think that He had fallen asleep. He began to breathe deeply, and the Gopis felt that He was fast asleep. They began to converse softly. Shri Krishna loves to hear what the Gopis discuss. So, when He shuts His eyes, to hear their talk, His eyes wish to open; and even though He tries to control His skin, it tingles with love. He pretends that He is asleep, so that He can hear their unguarded words of love for Him. Thus, the nights passed.

When Shri Krishna awoke at dawn, He did not see Maiya in the room. Where did she go? He called out, “Maiya! O, Maiya!” Then He yawned, and stretched Himself, twisted a little on the bed, rubbed His eyes, causing the kajal\* to spread all over His face. He sat up in bed, with His legs swinging down the side. Every day, Maiya would wash His face and hands, but she did not come that day. Where did she go? Just then, He glanced to one side, and saw her churning the curd. Shri Krishna got off the bed at once, and went over to her, saying, “Maiya, I want to drink milk.” Maiya, however, was so intent on what she was doing, that she did not heed Him. The Lord sprawled on the floor, with displeasure.

See the good fortune of Maiya – the total, complete Grace of the Poorna\* Brahman is on her. The Lord is eager to drink her milk, and rolling with impatience upon the floor. Maiya just had to take Him onto her lap. She

stopped churning the curd. What is the need to churn the milky ocean, when the elixir is procured? Maiya began to feed, and Shri Krishna began to drink. Just then, the milk which was being heated started to boil over. Maiya said, “This is the precious milk of the special cow.” The milk of a thousand cows was fed to a hundred cows. The milk of those hundred cows was then fed to ten cows, and the milk of those ten cows was then fed to this special cow called Padmagandha\*, and she provided the milk for Shri Krishna. “What will I give Shri Krishna, if the milk overflows?” thought Maiya. “Let me save the milk first, and then I will feed Lala. My milk will remain intact for him, anyway.” So, Maiya placed Shri Krishna aside, and went to save the milk.

The episode shows that sometimes, we have to put aside the one we love, for the sake of something our loved one loves. It is a sign of love when the one who loves protects the things which are useful for the loved one.

And then, the milk is itself a Bhakta of many births. Nobody knows how many previous births the milk has had. It was born as grass, and went into the stomach of the cow. It became milk and was heated upon a fire. It was burning, practicing asceticism. It saw that the Lord was drinking His mother’s milk – He would fill Himself with His mother’s milk. “So, it is better that I commit suicide,” thought the milk, and began to boil over onto the fire.

But Maiya couldn’t contain herself. She left her Lala, and picked up the pot of boiling milk. When she returned, Shri Krishna was not there, where she had left Him. Where did He go, then? At this point, Shri Shukadevji Maharaj has described how Shri Krishna got angry, because Maiya left Him. Don’t be taken aback at the word, ‘anger’ being used, because it is natural that He should get angry, when Maiya interrupted His feeding. See the love behind the anger. Would this love have been revealed, had He continued to lie in bed, instead of coming to Maiya for her milk? Would His love have been revealed, had He not got angry that His mother left Him before He drank to His satisfaction? This is an example of how much the Lord loves His devotees. It is also an example of how the blessings of great people can bestow the great good fortune of having the chance to feed the Lord, Himself, with the nectarine milk of a mother. This episode reveals the importance of three factors – the effect of being blessed by a great person, the love a devotee has for the Lord, and the love the Lord has, for His devotees.

Another viewpoint is that anyone who succumbs to kama, krodha and lobha, will suffer – even if it is the Lord, Himself. He will get worldly bondage. So,

it is essential that a sadhak\* should be alert constantly. When these evils come even to the Lord, it is obvious that nobody is exempt from them.

Also, it is seen that the Lord accepts even kama-krodha-lobha, for the sake of pleasing His devotees. He allows Himself to be tied by them. What can one say, about the foolishness of those who prefer to love any other, instead of loving such a Lord as this?

Shri Krishna broke the ancient pot, which had once belonged to Yashoda Maiya's grandmother-in-law. The quantity of milk which had spilled was so much that it seemed as though a new milky ocean had appeared in Nanda Bhavan! Then – as if Shri Krishna went to Yashoda Maiya and asked, “What is a child to do, if his mother does not look after him?” Saying this, He went and sat on an upturned ukhal. He got the company of the khala\*. He began to eat stale butter. He would eat a little and give most of it to monkeys.

Just then, Maiya came to the scene, and said, “My son has become very clever at stealing things! OK, I will teach him a lesson today.” She began to tiptoe towards him. However, Shri Krishna got a glimpse of the cane in her hand. He jumped down from the pounding stone, and fled in fear. Maiya chased Him. Shri Krishna was running ahead, and Maiya was running after him. Visualize the scene! But remember, also, that so long as we hold on to any material object, and hold material objects in our heart, we shall not succeed in catching the Chaitanya\*; we cannot obtain the Lord.

Then the Lord thought, “If My Bhakta is seen to be incapable of catching Me, how will the Bhakti Sampraday continue to flourish? The Bhakti Sampradaya flourishes only when the Lord succumbs to His devotees. If the Lord refused to unbend; if He were to stand tall and declare that He would only punish the wrong doers, then the Bhaya\* Sampraday would prevail, not the Bhakti Sampraday! What would Yamaraj do, if the Lord took over the jurisdiction of justice? Yamaraj is assigned to meet out justice. The Lord is the one who pardons. The President has the power to pardon – not to give a verdict of death by hanging. So, the Lord bows to the desire of His devotees, pardons them, shows compassion and Grace. How would anybody feel devotion for the Lord, had this not been the case?

Hence, the Lord allowed Maiya to catch Him. Even so, He showed fear of the cane in her hand, and said, “Maiya, throw away your cane first! I feel scared of it.” Maiya said, “You monkey! You naughty boy! Why did you break my dadhiyasaas'\* pot?” Shri Krishna said, “Maiya, I'll never do it again! Please throw away your cane!”

See - this is the greatness of a Bhakta! You cannot find a God like this in any other religion sect in the world; a God who is frightened, with tears in His eyes, and whose tears smear kajal all over His face! The Lord abandons His

godliness, His magnificence, and becomes an adorable child. It is a vision worth seeing, in this episode.

When Maiya wanted to tie Shri Krishna up, His Yoga Maya would not permit Him to be bound. “Can it ever be possible that the advitiya\*, asanga\*, naam-roop-rahit\* paripoorna gets bound? Bondage is for that which has a form, and a name; has rajoguna and tamoguna.”

However, the Lord is so compassionate that He did not listen to Yoga Maya, especially when He saw that each time Maiya attempted to tie Him; the rope fell short by two fingers, Maiya was tired out, beads of perspiration were on her face, and so He allowed Himself to be tied. The Bhagwat states, with absolute clarity, that the Lord bestows Grace when the devotee gives up the vanity of thinking that he/she has the capacity to pressurize Him in any way.

स्वमातुः स्विन्नगात्राया विस्त्रस्तकबरस्त्रजः ।

दृष्ट्वा परिश्रमं कृष्णः कृपयाऽऽसीत् स्वबन्धने ॥ १०.९.१८

*Svamaatuh svinnagaatraayaa vistrastakabarasrajah,*

*Drishtvaa parishramam krishnah kripyaaseet svabandhane`.*

10.9.18.

People ask whether the Lord ties Himself, or whether Maiya tied Him. My brother, why should it bother you if He was tied by the hands of His mother? The Lord was tied by Maiya, after she was tired out, and perspiring with her exertions. भक्तजनपरिश्रमः भगवन्निष्ठा कृपा च उभयमेव बन्धनहेतुः ‘*Bhaktajanaparishramah bhagavannishthaa kripaa cha ubhayame`va bandhanahe`tuh`*’ – what is the reason for the Lord’s being tied? One reason is that the devotee should realize that it is not by his strength that the Lord is tied. The second reason is that compassion arose in the Lord’s heart. These are the two reasons for the Lord being tied.

एवं संदर्शिता ह्यङ्ग हरिणा भृत्यवश्यता ।

स्ववशेनापि कृष्णेण यस्येदं सेश्वरं वशे ॥ १०.९.१९.

*E`vam sandarshitaa hyanga harinaa bhrityavashyataa,*

*Svavashe`naapi krishne`na yasye`dam se`shvaram vashe`.*

10.9.19.

The Lord, who controls Brahma-Vishnu-Mahesh, is showing the people of the world: “See for yourselves! I am controlled by My devotees, despite being the Parameshwar. My devotee ties Me, and I get bound.

नेमं विरिंचो न भवो न श्रीरप्यङ्गसंश्रया ।

प्रसादं लेभिरे गोपी यत्तत् प्राप विमुक्तिदात् ॥ १०.९.२०.

*Ne`mam virincho na bhavo na shreerapyangasanshrayaa,  
Prasaadam le`bhire` gopee yattat praapa vimuktidaat.  
10.9.20.*

This compassion and Grace of Mine is not available even to Brahma-Shankar-Laxmi, but I bestow it on My devotees. I am, therefore, controlled by My Bhaktas, and by Bhakti. I am bound by the hands of My Bhaktas.”

When she had tied Shri Krishna, Maiya was overcome with motherly love. “Lala hasn’t eaten anything since early morning,” she thought. “Let me go and prepare butter and roti\* for him. Then I can bring it here and feed him.” She went off to prepare the food.

Shri Krishna’s gaze fell on Yamalarjuna, who had been sons of Kuber, called Nalakubar and Manigreeva. They had turned into trees due to a curse given by Naradji. So, the Lord said, “It is not Maiya who has tied Me, it is Naradji. I have been tied here, so that I can liberate these trees. The words of My devotee bind Me – My mother was just the instrument for achieving this purpose.”

Give your attention to this Leela of the Lord. What is so great about the fact that the Lord uplifts His devotees? What is so surprising about this? Maiya tied a rope round the Lord’s waist, which was not there previously. A khal – in the form of the ukhal – was also bound by this rope. However, when the khal went – dragged behind the Lord – in-between the trees, it served to liberate them. Under the circumstances, if the Lord, Himself comes into someone’s heart, what doubt is there, in his being liberated?

Kuber’s sons, Nalakubar and Manigreeva, had been blinded by the intoxication of wealth. They womanized, gambled, and drank heavily. They were behaving outrageously, in a state of complete undress, near Shankarji’s Kailash mountain; Naradji’s heart was filled with compassion, to see them thus. He felt that they were both going astray – they should be lead towards the right path. With this in mind, Naradji said, “These two should have the bodies of trees. They should stay at Gokul until they develop a love for the Lord, and attain Him.”

That is why Shri Krishna dragged the ukhal, and came in-between the trees called Yamalarjuna. The trees toppled over with a resounding crack. However, the sound was arrested – nobody heard it. Two Devtas emerged from the trees. They praised the Lord, saying that He was the one in every form, and prayed:

वाणी गुणानुकथने श्रवणों कथायां ।

हस्ती च कर्मसु मनस्तव पादयोर्नः ।

स्मृत्यां शिरस्तव निवासजगत्प्रणामे ।

दृष्टिः सतां दर्शनेऽस्तु भवत्तनूमाम् ।। १०.१०.३८

*Vaani gunaanukathane`shravanau kathaayaam*

*hastee cha karmasu manastava paadayornah,*

*Smrityaam shirastava nivaasajagatpranaame`*

*Drishtih sataam darshane`stu bhavattanoonaam.*

10.10.38.

“Lord, please let our speech be used to describe You. Let us speak – not only about You, but also about all the qualities and attributes bound to You – including the rope, because we have been liberated because of it.”

The Lord was pleased, and said, “Nalakubar and Manigreeva, please understand that Naradji has not cursed you; he has Graced you. I have come to you because of his blessing. The vision of a Saint can never result in bondage,”

Nalakubar and Manigreeva said, just as photographers say, “Lord, please sit on the ukhal, with the rope tied round Your waist. We wish to rest our eyes on this beautiful vision, and hold it in our hearts when we leave. O Damodar\*, the rope of gunas\* tied round Your waist is Your instrument for liberating people.”

The sound of the falling trees spread over Gokul when Nalakubar and Manigreeva had departed. Nandababa and others came running. Nandababa saw that Shri Krishna was tied with a rope. “Oh, my Lala is tied,” he said, untying the rope, and picking Shri Krishna up.

You see, Maiya tied Shri Krishna, and Nandababa untied Him, liberated Him. The fact is that there is neither bondage, nor liberation in the nature of the Lord. Bondage and liberation are established through super imposition.

Nandababa asked Shri Krishna, “Lala, who tied you up?” Shri Krishna had, at that moment, climbed onto Nandababa’s shoulders, and was playing with his beard. Nandababa was dancing. Shri Krishna put His face close to Baba’s ear, and whispered, “Baba, Maiya tied Me.” Nandababa said, “Oh, Maiya tied you, did she? Now don’t go near her at all.” “Yes, Baba, I’ll never go near her again,” said Shri Krishna.

Just then, He saw Maiya. He jumped down from Nandababa’s shoulder, clambered onto her lap, and began to suckle. An ambience of joy prevailed. We rest here, for today, and discuss the next episode tomorrow.

Om Shantih! Shantih! Shantih!

## Bhagwatamrit

### Pravarchan X

#### Skandha X

Each Leela of the Lord serves several purposes, carries different messages. One of the points about the Ukhal Bandhan Leela, discussed yesterday, was the fact that when kama, krodha, and lobha enter the life of a person – even in the case of powerful demigods like Brahmaji, or the Lord Himself – they, too, are forced to accept fear and bondage.

The second point is that the Lord voluntarily accepts kama, krodha, and lobha, etc, to Grace His devotees. He allows Himself to be bound, in order to liberate others. Nalakubar and Manigreeva were not the only ones liberated by the Lord. Even those who read, listen to, and speak of the Leela, are liberated.

The third point is that just the blessings, Grace, or boon of a Mahapurush is enough to enable us to bind the Lord. Nanda-Yahsoda got this Grace through the blessings of Prajapati.

The fourth point is that the saguna Lord acquires His own attributes. Guna means rope, bondage. The nirguna may be free of bondage, and do nothing to actively attract people, but the saguna Lord not only ties His devotees to Himself, He allows them to tie Him, through His gunas. This bondage grants the supreme bliss.

The fifth point is that there is neither bondage, nor liberation, in the Lord. The gunas can never touch Him. He was tied when Yashoda Maiya super imposed the gunas – the bondage – and became free when Nandababa negated the super imposed bonds. The Lord's natural state of being the supreme Almighty is self-established.

The Ukhal Bandhan Leela is predominantly a Leela of compassion. This becomes clear when we give it some thought. The fact is that just as there is no indication of You – त्वं-पदलक्ष्यार्थ 'tvam padalakshyarth' – in the same way, the Lord accepts the good and the bad tendencies which come into our lives, and the jeeva accepts the special qualities of the Lord. Unless this was the case, it would be impossible to establish the relationship of friendship – सखा 'sakhaa' – between the jeeva and the Ishwara. How is it possible that the jeev lies in bondage, and his sakhaa – Ishwar – sits aloof? So the Lord showed us, "Jeeva, you and I are friends, on an equal status. Just as I am free, in spite of feeling fear, running away, and being bound – in the same way, you, too, are free, in spite of feeling fear, trying to escape, or getting tied down."

Now, let us proceed to the porch of Nanda-Yashoda, in Gokul. See what is going on there –



दोभ्याँ दोभ्याँ ब्रजन्तं ब्रजसदनजनाह्वान प्रोल्लसन्तं  
मन्दं मन्दं हसन्तं मधुमधुरवचो मेति ब्रुवन्तम्।  
गोपाली-पाणिताली-तरलितवलयध्वानमुग्धात्रराचम्  
वन्दे तं देवमिन्दीवरदलविमलश्यामलं नन्दबालम्॥

*Dorbhyaam dorbhyaam vrajantam vrajasadannjanaahvaana prollasantam*  
*Mandam mandam hasantam madhumadhuravacho me`ti bruyantam,*  
*Gopaalee-paanitaalee-taralitavalayahvaanamugdhaantaraacham*  
*Vnade` tam de`vamindeeveradalavimalashyaamalam nandabaalam.*

A little blue-hued boy, covered with dust, is dancing to the rhythm of the Gopis' clapping. The Gopis say, "Dance, Lala, dance! I will give you a lump of butter." Hearing this, the child dances with greater zest. Seeing this, one Gopi told her friend:

श्रुणु सखि कौतुकमेकं नन्दनिकेताङ्गणे मया दृष्टम्।  
गोधुलिधूसरिताङ्गो नृत्यति वेदान्तसिद्धान्तः॥  
*Shrunu sakhi kautukame`kam nandanike`taangane` mayaa drishtam,*  
*Godhoolidhoosaritaango nrityati ve`dantasiddhantah.*

"My friends, He is just a child. Furthermore, He is covered with dust. He is dancing at the bidding of the Gopis. However, do you know who He really is? He is the personified principal of the Vedas."

Now, see – when you can accept that the Shaligram Shila\* is Vishnu, why should you feel hesitant to accept this child as the Brahman? Just believe that the child you see is Brahman, and see how happy you feel!

The jeeva tried to find the Brahman on the branches of the tree of the Vedas, but failed. And – where did he find Him? At the corner of the Gopis' saris.

वरमिममुपदेशमाद्रियध्वं निगमवनेषु नितान्तचारखिन्नाः।  
विचिनुत भवनेषु वल्लभीनामुपनिषदर्थमुलूखले निबद्धम्॥

*Varamimamupade`shamaadriyadhvam nigamavane`shu*  
*nitaantacharakhinnah,*  
*Vichinuta bhavane`shu vallabheenaamupanishadarhtamulookhale`*  
*nibaddham.*

The poet who wrote 'Krishna Karnamrit' says, "Don't seek the principal of the Vedas in the forest of the scriptures. Seek Him in the cowsheds of the Gopis – Look! He is there, tied to the Ukhal."

So, the meaning of the Upanishads was tied to the Ukhal! A rope was tied to His waist, and the Ukhal, tied to the rope, attained the power to turn two trees into Devtas.

The sweetness of the Lord is such that once we begin to relish it, there is no need to strive for detachment. As soon as we get attached to the Lord, we begin to get detached from everything else. That is why one poet Saint has said,

जो मोहि राम लागते मीठे ।

तो अनरस षटरस नवरस अरु हवै जाते सब सीठे ।

*Jo mohi raam laagate`meethe`,*

*To anarasa shatarasa navarasa aru hvai jaate`saba seethe`.*

So, this child is dancing! Yashoda Maiya says, “Lala, stop dancing now. Pick up the weighing stone, and come in.” The child rushes to pick up the vaat, but is unable to do so. Then he lies down, and tries to push it with his chest. His face turns red with his exertions. Yashoda Maiya says, “If you can’t lift the path, let it be,” and gives him a hug.

Nandababa comes just then, and says, “Lala, bring my khadau\*.” The child runs and fetches the wooden slippers. Nandababa lifts him onto his lap, kisses him, and showers affection on him.

This Leela of the baal Gopal\* is going on in the house of Nanda-Yashoda. How can the jeeva be controlled by the Lord, unless He allows Himself to be controlled by the jeeva? This is not a one-sided love – it is reciprocal. The Lord is not pleased with any one-sided love; He wants it to be reciprocated. It is the specialty of Vrindavan that the love here is always reciprocal.

There is so much love in Vrindavan, that when the trees crashed down, all the cowherds gathered, and said, “Nandababa, too many accidents are occurring in Gokul. Putana took our Lala off, and began to feed him poison. By the Grace of God, it was she who died. The cart toppled over our Lala, and luckily he was saved again. After that, he was saved even after the tornado carried him off. Now, these old trees have toppled over, and our Lala is saved once more. There is no doubt that we are protected by the blessings and Grace of Mahapurushas, and God. However, the plants and trees here are very old. There are also too many wild creatures who may harm our children. So, let us leave this village, and move to Vrindavan.”

Just think of it! The entire village leaves their homes and fields, and moves to Vrindavan with their movable possessions – for the sake of one child! Is it not quite extraordinary?

When all the Gopa-Gopis\*, and gwaal baals settled in Vrindavan, Shri Krishna danced with joy, to see how beautiful the place had become. A love for Vrindavan, for the Govardhan\*, and the banks of the Yamuna arose in His heart.

वृन्दावनं गोवर्द्धनं यमुनापुलिनानि च ।

वीक्ष्यासीदुत्तमा प्रीती राममाधवयोर्नृप ॥ १०.११.३६.

*Vrindavanam govardhanam yamunaapulinaani cha,*

*Veekshyaaseeduttamaa preetee raamamaadhavayornripa.*  
10.11.36.

Shri Krishna said, “I will go to the woods with the calves, when they are taken for grazing.” He was old enough to do so, and so people had to accept His wishes.

You see, we should not reject every suggestion made by the youngsters. We should never say, “You are foolish. We cannot let you do what you want.” The older generation lives in an older style, and the younger generation has a modern lifestyle. A gap of twenty or twenty five years exists between them. The youngsters should be allowed to develop according to their times.

So, Shri Krishna started to accompany the other gwaal baals, when they took the calves out to graze. One day, they met Vatsasura. This demon symbolizes mamatva\*. He thought that these people are very attached, and partial to their calves.

It is difficult to recognize the faults in those we are attached to. We fail to see the good in those we dislike, and fail to see the faults in those we are fond of. Whereas everybody has good and bad qualities, people are blinded by raga-dvesh\*.

Vatsasura took on the form of a calf, and mingled with the calves of Shri Krishna. He thought that the Lord’s affection for the calves would save him from being recognized for what he was.

However, who can escape the discriminating visions of Shri Krishna? He recognized Vatsasura, and said to Balaramji, “See, Dau dada, a beautiful new calf has joined our calves.” Pointing out the new calf, He came close to it. Catching both the hind feet and the tail, the Lord lifted it up, and whirled it over His head, and dashed it against a tree. The demon could sustain his calf form no more, and returned to his original form of a demon. The gwaal baals saw him, and said, “Oh, God! This was a demon!” They hugged Shri Krishna with joy, and danced with glee, singing, “The demon is dead! The demon is dead!”

The following day, Shri Krishna went with His friends and the calves, near a little lake created by the waters of the Yamuna. They saw a stork standing in the lake. All of you know what a hypocrite this bird is. It is difficult to find any other bird as hypocritical as the stork. He stands on one foot, as though practicing asceticism, but gobbles up every fish he sees.

The gwaal baals saw how beautiful this pure white stork was. They saw him stand on one foot, utterly silent. However, as soon as Shri Krishna went near him, he pounced on the Lord, and swallowed Him. This was a mistake. His mouth began to burn, because he had swallowed the Lord. Shri Krishna’s name is to be kept in the mouth, not His form! Bakasura\*’s action was at variance to what is proper. This made him Krishnavartma\*, and his mouth caught fire. He spat Shri Krishna out. As soon as He emerged, Shri Krishna caught the upper and lower beaks of the stork in His two hands, tore the demon into two, and threw him away.

The Devtas began to shower flowers upon Shri Krishna, when they saw that He had killed hypocrisy (which had come in the form of Bakasura). They knew that earlier, the Lord had destroyed nescience, personified as Putana, and also the hurricane, which was personified desire. The Devtas became worshippers of Shri Krishna.

On one occasion, Balaramji stayed at home, because it was the day of his astrological birth sign. Shri Krishna went with the other youngsters, to a nearby wood, to graze the calves.

The gwaal baals began to play with Shri Krishna. For a while, they forgot that He was the Lord.

The success of acting a role – of drama – lies in those watching, forgetting reality, and losing themselves in the play. Shri Krishna played like an ordinary child. Shri Shukadevjī Maharaj told Parikshit, “The same Lord – the dust of whose feet cannot be obtained even by several births of intense asceticism – is playing joyfully with the gwaal baals –

यत्पादपांसुर्बहुजन्मकृच्छ्रो धृतात्मभिर्योगिभिरप्यलम्ब्यः ।

स एव यद्दृग्विषयः स्वयं स्थितः किं वर्ण्यते दिष्टमतो ब्रजौकसाम् ॥ १०.१२.१२.

*Yatpaadapaansurbahujanmakricchrito dritaاتمabhiryogibhirapyalambyah,*

*Sa e`va yaddrigvishayah svayam sthitah kim varnyate` ishtamato vrajaukasaam.*

10.12.12.

Now a demon called Aghasura\* came, while Shri Krishna played with the children. Agha means sin, and can not be destroyed until it has meted out its fruit – न हन्यते भोगं विना इति अधः ‘na hanyate` bhogam vinaa iti aghah’. You can refuse a prize, but you cannot refuse a penalty. The fruits of merit can be avoided. They can be offered to another. You can not, however, avoid the consequences of your sins; and that is why it is called ‘agha’. There is no way to save ourselves from it – it must be gone through.

Aghasura was the brother of Nescience – Putana, and of Hypocrisy – Bakasura. He had, moreover, been sent by Kansa. So, he could not bear to see the gwaal baals happy. He opened his mouth wide. The gwaal baals did not know who he was, because how can anybody, who has never encountered sin, know what it is? Hence, the gwaal baals felt that this must be a part of the natural beauty of Vrindavan. They casually strolled in, along with the calves, right into Aghasura’s mouth. Aghasura was just waiting for Shri Krishna to also enter, before he closed his mouth.

Shri Krishna thought, “I am where My Bhaktas are.” Actually, the Lord does not have a house of His own. He abides in the heart of every creature, as He has stated in the Gita.

ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति ।

*Ishvarah sarvabhootaanaam hridde`she`rjuna tishthati.*

So, the Lord is where His devotees are. If a devotee once enters the mouth of Agha, sin, or jealousy, he can not save himself. It is the Lord who saves him. Had it been the nirguna Lord, He would merely have watched all that happened, and said, “Nothing exists, apart from My essence.”

However, this is the saguna Lord, who said, “I will definitely go wherever My devotees go.” This is the God-like quality of the Lord. He purifies the sullied, carries forward those who are left behind, and raises up the lowly. It is His vow –

अपि चेत्सुदुराचारो भजते मां अनन्यभाक् ।  
साधुरेव स मन्तव्यः सम्यक् ध्यवसितो हि सः ॥  
क्षिप्रं भवति धर्मत्मा शश्वच्छान्तिं निगच्छति ।  
कौन्तेय प्रतिजानीहि न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति ॥  
गीता

*Api che`tsuduraachaaro bhajate`maam ananyabhak,*  
*Saadhuriva sa mantavyah samyak vyavasito hi sah.*  
*Kshipram bhavati dharmaatmaa shashvatshaantim nigacchati,*  
*Kaunte`ya pratijaaneehi na me`bhakta pranashyati.*  
*Gita.*

So, the Lord entered the mouth of Aghasura. The demon was waiting for this, and promptly closed his mouth. The Lord said, “Son, you have sealed My exit, but I will go out from your doorway.” The Brahmarandhra\* of Aghasura burst open. Shri Krishna came out, along with the gwaal baals and the calves. Jut then, a bright glow emerged from Aghasura, and merged into the form of Shri Krishna.

There is nothing to wonder at, in this, The Atma of Agha, is also the Paramatma. Both are of the same essence. Merit and demerit exist in the same sub-stratum, get illumined, and are pervaded by the Atman (the bliss).

When the glow which emerged from Aghasura merged into Shri Krishna, a celebration took place at Devloka. At that time, Brahmaji was busy giving appropriate bodies to the jeevas. One must keep in mind that Brahmaji does not create the basic matter – he merely assembles the parts. This is his factory, because the basic matter – Prakriti - already exists, and so does karma. Brahmaji merely assembles these factors and makes the form.

Hearing sounds of celebration, Brahmaji came out and began to wonder where the celebration was being held. He realized that it was not being held at his doorstep. Nor was it being held in Heaven – it was being held on Earth, and that too, in the Vrajabhoomi\*. Brahmaji went there immediately. He saw, and understood, all that had happened. He was shocked to think that Aghasura had been liberated. “Our

Vedas, Puranas, and Shastras have no mention of the liberation of sin! Sin can be liberated only in the non-dual Paramatma, so it does not come within the jurisdiction of rituals and strictures. What is it, then? It is the Leela of the Paramatma, who is beyond all rules and norms! Brahmaji said, “Come, let us see some more of His Leela, because it is so difficult to believe that such a Leela is possible.”

The Leela seen by Brahmaji, when he came to Vrindavan, was quite extraordinary. It was also beyond the jurisdiction of the scriptural laws. After coming out of Aghasura’s mouth, the gwaal baals, and calves, and Shri Krishna, went to the banks of the Yamuna. They opened their food hampers, which had been poisoned when carried into Aghasura’s mouth, took out the food, and sat down together to eat it. Shri Krishna sat in the center, and the gwaal baals sat around Him in circles.

This is the Leela of the Sakhya Rasa\*. Just as the Raas Leela with the Gopis belongs to the Madhur Rasa\*, and contains dancing, singing, music, and drama, in the same way, this Leela contains a meal with friends. The Lord is having a picnic with His friends. Seeing the scene, Shri Shukadevji Maharaj says:

बिभ्रद्वेणुं जठरपटयोः शृङ्गवेत्रे च कक्षे  
वामे पाणौ मसृणकवलं तत्फलान्यगुलीषु।  
तिष्ठन्मध्येस्वपरिसुहृदो हासयन् नर्मभिः स्वैः  
स्वर्गे लोके मिषति बुभुजे यज्ञभुग्बालकेलिः॥ १०.१३.११.

*Vibhradve`num jatharapatayoh shringave`tre`cha kakshe`  
Vaame`paanau masrinakavalam tatfalaanyanguleeshu,  
Tishthanmadhye`svaparisuhrida haasayan narmabhih svaih  
Svarge`loke`mishati bubhuje`yagyabhugvaalake`lih.  
10.13.11.*

“My brother, how wonderful it is, that the Lord – who does not appear to partake of the offering, after the chanting of great mantras spoken in Yagyas – is sitting with these simple cowherd boys, and having a meal with them! He does not even have a plate – leaf, or metal. Every boy present feels that Shri Krishna is seated directly opposite him. The Lord holds curd-rice on the palm of His left hand, and eats with His right hand. His flute is tucked in the garment tied at His waist.”

This is why the Mahatmas taunt the Lord, by saying, “You play in the dust of the courtyards of these cowherds, but are shy of coming to the Yagyas of the Brahmins? When the cows moo and burp, You talk to them, but You do not care to speak the mantras of the Vedas! You walk behind these rustic Gopis, but feel shy to come before the Mahatmas! Oh, Lord, we understand. You are not bound by any laws of creation. You submit to love. It is only by love that You are attained.”

The Love of the cowherd boys is so extraordinary that they never even realize His divine powers. Whenever they encounter danger, they merely say, “Kanhaiya\* is stronger than we are – call him to come and save us.”

Thus, the love of all the Gopis, Gopas\*, and gwaal baals, is beyond description. They are all immersed in thoughts and memories about Him.

Brahmaji was amazed to see all this. He marveled at the extraordinary ground of Vraja. Then he noticed that Shri Krishna was eating a meal with His friends, and deriving great pleasure. He was not at all bothered about the contamination of disregarding the factors of caste, or eating from another’s plate. Brahmaji was troubled, because this was against the strictures of the Vedas.

While such thoughts flitted through the mind of Brahmaji, the calves were lured towards tender grass – तृणलोभिता ‘*trinalobhitaa*’. They wandered into the forest. The attention of the gwaal baals shifted from Shri Krishna to their wandering calves. Attachment for their calves filled their hearts, and they began to worry about bringing their calves back. Seeing this, it was as though Shri Krishna said, “Wait, wait! I sit before you, and you look at the calves, instead of looking at Me!”

You will see this phenomenon all through the Shrimad Bhagwat. Trouble comes, whenever attention is shifted away from Shri Krishna. Putana lifted up Shri Krishna when Yashoda Maiya began to look at her, instead of the Lord. The cart toppled over when Maiya got busy with her guests. The hurricane lifted up Shri Krishna, and carried Him away, when she got engrossed with household chores. The trees toppled over when Maiya went indoors, after tying Shri Krishna to the Ukhal.

The same thing happened here. When the gwaal baals started to look for their calves, Shri Krishna told them to finish their meal. “I will bring the calves back,” He said. But, where were the calves? Brahmaji had kidnapped them. He also kidnapped the cowherd boys, when Shri Krishna went off to look for the calves. He imprisoned the boys and their calves in the cave of suspended animation. From the angle of Bhakti, Samadhi is a cave. We will discuss this later.

When Shri Krishna realized that neither the calves, nor His friends were to be found, He understood what had happened. “So, this is Brahmaji’s doing. He wishes to see My Leela!”

But, which Leela should Brahmaji be shown? What is the use of showing off one’s knowledge of the Vedas to a scholar of Grammar, or vice versa? It is proper to display one’s skills in the field of the other’s specialty.

The Lord said, “Brahmaji, you are skilled at making creatures. You assemble the parts, and make beautiful bodies. But – see, today I will create a world. My Creation does not have a jeeva with a previous birth; nor is there an antahkaran. There is no stuff for Me to mould. I will, Myself, turn into many.”

The Lord's ability is wonderful. He has no matter to mould, no wall to rest against, no foundation to build upon, no physical body, no pen, no cotton, no color – and yet, He creates the picture. He alone takes on many forms.

स एकधा भवति, द्विधा भवति, त्रिधा भवति,  
पंचधा भवति, सप्तधा भवति, अनेकधा भवति।

*Sa e`kadhaa bhavati, dvidhaa bhavati, tridhaa bhavati,  
Panchadhaa bhavati, saptaadhaa bhavati, ane`kadhaa bhavati.*

This is why Goswami Tulsidas said:

शून्य भीतिपर चित्र रंग नहि तनु बिनु लिखा चितेरे।  
*Shoonya bheetipara chitra rang nahi tanu binu likhaa chite`re`.*

So, the Lord Shri Krishna created, merely by deciding to do so, such a new world – which prevailed for one full year! Seeing this unique creation, Balaramji did become suspicious. The Lord told him briefly, about what had happened. Balaramji is the Lord's friend, as well as His seat. He is also Prakriti, and the principal. So, the Lord felt that it was proper to share the secret with him.

When Brahmaji took the spirit of the calves and gwaal baals to his land, he found that another Brahmaji had come and established himself there. The gate keeper insulted him, refusing to let him enter. He returned to Vraja, only to see the gwaal baals and calves lying unconscious, just as he had left them. However, identical youngsters and calves were playing, where they normally played. Brahmaji was quite astonished to see this. At once, all the youngsters and calves took on the form of Shri Krishna. Brahmaji became pale, and stood stupefied, like a dumb puppet.

इतिरेशेऽतर्क्ये निजमहिमनि स्वप्रमितिके  
परत्राजातोऽतन्निरसनमुखब्रह्मकमितौ।  
अनीशेऽपि द्रष्टुं किमिदमिति वा मुह्यति सति  
चछादाजो ज्ञात्वा सपदि परमोऽजाजवनिकाम्॥ १०.१३.५७.  
*Iteere`she`atarkye` nijamahimani svapramitike`  
Paratraajaatoatannirasanamukhabrahmakamitau,  
Aneeshe`api drashtum kimidamiti vaa muhyati sati  
Chacchaadaajo gyaatvaa sapadi paramoajajanikaam.  
10.13.57.*

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj says, “Parikshit, Brahmaji possesses the knowledge of all the skills, but he failed absolutely in understanding the Lord's divine Leela. He was so



confused that he became incapable of even looking at all these forms assumed by the Lord. His eyes were dazzled by seeing the Lord's multiple forms. When the Lord observed Brahmaji's condition, He immediately withdrew the curtain of Maya.

Brahmaji then came to his senses. He had the vision of the Lord. He jumped down from the swan, which is his usual mount, and started to roll at the feet of the Lord. He eulogized the Lord.

Please note that the indication of this episode is that the Lord is non-dual. Prakriti is also the name of the Paramatma. Nothing exists, except the Paramatma. Brahmaji had the experience of this principle of Advait\*. He thought that discrimination is of no use, now. It is the Brahman, which is Knowledge incarnate, which is needed. Vivek\* is used only to separate, for the purpose of discriminating between two or more objects; whereas gnan unifies. So, Brahmaji prayed:

नौमीड्य तेऽभ्रवपुषे तडिदम्बराय  
गुंजावतंस - परिपिच्छलसन्मुखय ।  
वन्यस्त्रे कवलवेत्र - विषाणवेणु -  
लक्ष्मश्रिये मृदुपदे पशुपांगजाय ॥ १०.१४.१.

*Naumeedya te`bhravapushe`tadidambaraaya  
Gunjaavatanasha-paripicchalasanmukhaaya,  
Vanyasraje`kavalave`tra vishaanave`nu  
Lakshmathriye`mridupade`pashupangajaaya.  
10.14.1.*

“Lord, I know neither the Nirguna, nor the Saguna. My all-in-all stands before me – with a handful of curds and rice, with a flute tucked into His waist band, wearing a golden garment, in the form of this blue-hued Nanda Nandan. I know nothing except Him, so I bow to You.”

Eulogizing the Lord in this manner, Brahmaji said that this whole world is a conviction caused by not knowing the Paramatma. It is ignorance which deludes us into believing that the world is real. This false understanding dissolves as soon as we obtain the ultimate Gnan. The nature of the Lord has neither bondage, nor liberation – just as day and night do not exist for the Sun. The Sun never sees night or day.

आत्मानमेवात्मतयाविजानतां तेनैव जातं निखिलं पप्रंचितम् ।  
ज्ञानेन भूयोऽपि च तत्प्रलीयते रज्ज्वामहेर्भोगभवाभवौ यथा ॥  
अज्ञानसंज्ञौ भवबन्धमोक्षौ द्वौ नाम नान्यौ स्त ऋतज्ञभवात् ।  
अजस्त्रचित्यात्मनि केवले परे विचारमाणे तरणाविवाहनी ॥ १०.१४.२५-२६

*Aatmaaname`vaatmatayaavijaanataam te`naiva jaatam nikhilam prapanchitam,  
Gnaane`na bhooyoapi cha tatpraleeyate`rajjvaamahe`rbhogabhavaabhavau yathaa.*

*Agnaanasamgnau bhavabandhamokshau dvau naama naanyau sta ritagnabhaavaat,  
Ajasrachintyaatmani ke`vale` pare` vichaaryamaane` taranaavivaahani.  
10.14.25-26.*

Brahmaji further said, “Lord, I desire only Your Grace. I want neither liberation, nor birth. Make me some object in Vraja.”

Then, as though the Lord asked, “What should I make you, Brahmaji? Should I make you Brahma again?”

Brahmaji said, “No, Sir, I have no wish to be Brahma. Make me anything in Vraja.”

The Lord asked, “All right, but what in Vraja – a cow, a calf, or a cowherd boy?”

Brahmaji said, “No, no, Sir! I have wronged them. Don’t make me any of these. Make me some object, on which the dust of their feet may fall.”

After the Lord bid farewell to Brahmaji, He came to the bank of the Yamuna, where He had left the cowherd boys. Brahmaji had already arranged for them to be returned to the spot from where he had kidnapped them. When the youngsters saw Shri Krishna, they heaved a sigh of relief. “Thank God you have come, Kanhaiya!” they said. “You are most welcome! See - we did not eat a single mouthful after you left us to bring the calves back.” The Lord smiled to Himself, and sat down to enjoy a meal with His friends.

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj clarified to Parikshit, that even though a full year had elapsed between the time Shri Krishna left the gwaal baals, and returned, His Maya ensured that they felt that He had been away for just a moment.

Rama and Krishna were now old enough to take the cows out to graze. Both brothers would go into the forest with their friends. They would derive immense pleasure to see the natural beauty.

Now, when you think about Shri Krishna’s go-charan\*, think of who your go-charan is. Gokul does not mean just a particular village. It also means a group of senses – गवलं कुलं गोकुलम् ‘gavaama kulam gokulam’. It is with you, too. Your ears are the cows, and your eyes and nose are cows, too. All of your senses feed on objects, so it is essential for you to pay attention as to who the cowherd is. Just think – is Kama the cowherd? Are your senses driven by desire, or are they driven by the Parameshwar who abides in your heart? Your senses will be controlled properly when you focus on who they are lead by.

This is what was happening in Vrindavan. The Lord incarnate is the one who is controlling the senses of the people. It is neither desire, nor the one who desires, and nor the jeeva either. The Lord has made Himself an ordinary person here. From Nirakar, He became Sakar. He came from Vaikuntha to Vrindavan, and presented Himself before our senses. This is because the Lord can give salvation to us only where we reside. We have no capacity to go where He is. How can the jeeva and the Ishwara ever meet, unless He came to us?

If you ask, “How does the Lord come?” The answer is that just as the *vaachyarthā\** jeeva comes and goes, so does the Lord. The only difference is that the jeeva comes and goes as a result of Avidya, whereas the Lord comes and goes using His Maya.

So, one day, when the Lord went to the forest to graze the cows, He saw the natural beauty, and told His brother, “Dau Dada, the great Devtas worship you. But see – these trees bend towards you, laden with fruit. They are bowing down to you. Just see – the wild peacocks, deer, and cuckoos, are so happy to see you! Even the tender grass is thrilled to get the touch of your feet. Actually, the entire forest serves you, with all its wealth and beauty.”

Rama-Krishna were wandering around, discussing how lovely the woods were, when a friend called Shridama\* said, “Close by, there is a large wood of Palmyra trees. The fruits are sweet and ripe. The over-ripe ones are falling down. A wicked demon called Dhenuka lives there, and won’t allow anyone to eat the fruits. We are all very keen to eat these sweet fruits.”

Rama-Krishna laughed to hear these words. They accompanied their friends into the Palmyra grove. Balaramji shook the trees with his strong hands, causing hundreds of ripe fruits to fall. Everybody ate them with relish.

Just then, Dhenukasura\*, who lived there, in the form of a donkey, came running and attacked Balaramji. Even though the demon was exceptionally strong, Balaramji lifted him easily, by both his hind legs. He whirled the demon around, and dashed him so hard, that he died.

Shri Vallabhacharyaji Maharaj has said that Dhenukasura is the personification of the *dehadhyas\** - देहाध्यासो हि धेनुकः ‘*de`haadhyasō hi dhe`nukah.*’ According to him, the feeling that we are the body, is called ‘dhe`nuk’, and the ‘taal’, ‘taad’, or ‘taar’ (the Palmyra) is the Omkar. Our identification with our body is the barrier in our tasting the supreme fruit. So, Balaramji went along with Shri Krishna, and destroyed the demon Dhenukasura.

The episode, of Kaliya Daha\*, comes next. The word ‘dahar’ is used in the Upanishads. ‘Dahar’ became ‘hrad’, and ‘hrad’ turned into ‘daha’ in Hindi.

One day, Balaramji stayed at home, and Shri Krishna went with the cows and the cowherd boys, to a particular spot on the bank of the Yamuna. A serpent called Kaliya lived in the Yamuna at that spot, and his venom had poisoned the water there. Due to the intensely warm weather, the cows and the youths were all very thirsty. They ignored the danger, drinking deeply to quench their thirst. The poison was so strong that they died on the spot. However, Shri Krishna revived them all, showering them with the elixir just by His divine look.

Shri Krishna then decided that since Yamunaji – the daughter of the Sun – was His sweetheart, His darling, and was later on to become His fourth principal Queen at Dwarka, He would throw out the Kaliya nag\* from inside her waters.

Shri Vallabhacharyaji Maharaj says that our senses are like the Kaliya nag, and when we indulge indiscriminately with the ‘vishayas’\*, it is like imbuing ‘vish’ (poison).

So, the Lord Shri Krishna jumped into the waters of the Yamuna, with the purpose of purifying the sense organs of His devotees, absorbing the poison as Shankarji had done, and removing the Kaliya nag from there.

Kaliya nag was fast asleep. His wives – the nagins\* - saw Shri Krishna, and asked, “How did you come here? Go away quickly! Our husband is extremely venomous!”

Shri Krishna said, “Let him be as venomous as he wants,” and kicked the sleeping serpent, calling out a challenge. The serpent woke up hissing with anger. When his eyes fell on Shri Krishna, however, he was enchanted. “I have never before, in my life, forgiven anyone,” he told the Lord. “However, I am bewitched by your beauty. So – if you desire your own good, leave me quickly.”

Shri Krishna said, “Oh, Kaliya – I did not come here to simply turn back! The purpose of My coming here is to make you go away. If you agree, you can leave this river immediately. If not, we will fight it out.”

Shri Krishna and Kaliya nag then began to wrestle. Kaliya caught Shri Krishna tightly in his coils, and gave Him such a bite, that for a moment, the Lord became immobile. All the people in Vraja were horrified to see this. They began to weep and lament. Balaramji, however, knew the power of the Lord. He managed to convince everybody that there was no cause for fear.

When Shri Krishna saw how tense everyone had become, He inflated His body, and freed Himself from the serpent’s coils. This angered Kaliya even more, and he hissed with renewed anger. Shri Krishna jumped onto the head of this hundred-headed serpent, and began to perform the Tandav Nritya (divine dance). The Gandharvas, Apsaras, and other great Devtas – including Brahma and Shankar – came to see the Lord’s Tandav Nritya. Shri Shukadevji Maharaj describes it:

तच्चित्रताण्डवविरुग्णफणातपत्रो

रक्तं मुखैरुरु वमन् नृप भग्नगात्रः ।

स्मृत्वा चराचरगुरुं पुरुषं पुराणं

नारायणं तमरणं मनसा जगाम ॥ १०.१६.३०.

*Tachchitrataandavavirugnafanaatapatro*

*Raktam mukhairuru vaman nripa bhagnajatrah,*

*Smritvaa charaacharagurum purusham puraanam*

*Naaraayanam tamaranam manasaa jagaama.*

10. 16. 30.

“Parikshit, the Lord danced such a tandav on the heads of Kaliya nag, that His feet tore the serpent’s hoods to shreds. The serpent’s body was crushed. He began to vomit blood. Then he thought of God, and mentally surrendered to Him.

Seeing this, the wives of Kaliya nag began to eulogize the Lord. It was an amazing stuti. They said, “Lord, You have punished our husband – this is not Your justice, it is Your Grace! Because, even great ascetics are unable to obtain the touch of Your feet. Our husband is guilty. We have no idea as to what austerities he may have performed in the past, to obtain Your Grace in this way.”

The Lord was pleased, and jumped down from Kaliya’s head. The serpent regained consciousness, and said, “Shri Krishna, whether You control me, or Grace me; whether You punish me, or show mercy – I will say what is in my mind. Please tell me, is it not You, who created the world?”

“Yes,” replied the Lord, “I have created the world.”

“Is it not You, who became the world?”

“It is I who have become the world.”

“Are You not its abhinnanimittopaadan karana (material and instrumental cause)?”

“Yes, certainly I am.”

“All that is in this world – the jaati\*, aakriti\*, svabhaav\*, all the good and the bad tendencies, all the strength, ability and power – is it not all created by You?”

“Yes, it is.”

“Is it not You, who made me a serpent?”

“It is, indeed, I who made you a serpent.”

“Is it not You, who put venom in my tooth?”

“It is.”

“Then, what is new, about what I do? If it pleases You, then uplift me; or leave me, but You have to admit that You are responsible for all that has happened here.”

This argument left Shri Krishna with nothing more to say. He said, “You came to this spot, because you feared Garudaji. However, I now plan to frolic here, so it is not suitable for you to remain here. I have placed My foot on your head. As a result, you are now liberated. You need fear Garudaji no more and can safely return to your original home.”

Look, even the snake is a creature of the Kingdom of the Lord. Hence, even snakes have their uses, and deserve a place to live, and food to eat.

Answering Parikshit’s question as to the cause of the quarrel between the Garuda and Kaliya nag, Shri Shukadevji Maharaj said, “Kaliya nag had, on one occasion, refused to give his portion of the routine sacrifice given to Garuda. So, Garudaji was annoyed with him. At first, Kaliya nag fought with Garudaji, but when he lost, he went and hid in the Yamuna.

Garudaji did not come to the Kaliya daha, because Saubhari Rishi had cursed Garudaji, saying that he would die if he came to this spot. It was most inappropriate of Saubhari Rishi to curse the mount of the Lord in this way. As a result, he got entangled in sensual pleasures. And, although Garudaji didn’t come to the Kaliya daha, the Lord came, and purified the spot.

When Shri Krishna emerged from the water, after subduing Kaliya, He was embraced lovingly by all the people. Nandababa gave lots of offerings to the Brahmins. Yashoda Maiya looked as though life had been restored to her.

By then, the sun had set. Everyone was mentally and physically exhausted. They all lay down on the bank of the Yamuna, and went to sleep. All of a sudden, the whole place burst into flames at midnight, and the Vrajvasis\* were trapped in between. They cried out to Rama-Krishna, to save them. Seeing His people in trouble, Shri Krishna consumed the fire.

You see, the fire was Devagni – a divine fire. It consumed all the poisoned items, to ensure that there would be no risk of hungry people, or cattle, consuming a poisoned item. Agni\* arises from the mouth of the Lord, and merges in His mouth. That is why the Lord took fire into His mouth.

Balaramji's killing Pralambasura\* is described next. Pralamba was a particularly frightening demon. He wanted to kidnap both Rama and Krishna, but realized that it was beyond his power to kidnap Shri Krishna. He decided to kidnap Balaramji.

Shri Krishna recognized Pralambasura, and was thinking of the best way to deal with him. He made a plan, and told the gwaal baals to split up into two teams, and play some games. Balaramji became the leader of one team, and Shri Krishna became the leader of the other team.

Pralamba took on the form of a cowherd boy, and mingled with the boys in Shri Krishna's team. The rules of the play were that the losing team would carry the members of the winning team on their shoulders. So, when Balaramji's team won, Shri Krishna took Shridama on His shoulders, and Pralamba took Balaramji.

This was the moment Pralamba was waiting for. He started to run off with Balaramji, returning to his original form after a while. Balaramji understood the demon's intention. He punched Pralambasura's head so hard, that it was smashed, and the demon fell down dead. The gwaal baals were shocked to see this. They showered Balaramji with good wishes.

The next episode is that of Shri Krishna saving the gwaal baals and calves from the forest fire. While eating the lush grass, the cows had wandered deep into a thick forest. Shri Krishna, Balaramji, and the gwaal baals did not realize where the cows had gone. They followed the marks of the hooves, and saw that the cows were trapped between clumps of tall grass. They were lowing in fear. Shri Krishna called out their names lovingly, and they came rushing joyfully to Him.

A forest fire started all of a sudden, with a strong breeze fanning the flames. Not only the cows, even the cowherd boys were in peril. Terrified, they called out to Balaramji and Shri Krishna to save them. Shri Krishna said, "Do not fear. Just close your eyes." Everyone closed their eyes. Shri Krishna used His yogic power to drink up the fire.

This fire was the asura agni\*. Shri Krishna consumed it, however, because the karya\* always dissolves into the karan\*.

The gwaal baals and cows returned to Vraja in the evening, with Shri Krishna and Balaramji following. The youngsters were singing the praises of the two brothers. When they reached Vraja, Nandababa, Yashoda Maiya, and all the others experienced a divine ecstasy at the sight of Shri Krishna.

The adhyatmik angle of this episode should be understood. Certain demons are destroyed by Balaramji, and certain by Shri Krishna. So, when a person undertakes a sadhana, he needs to have both atma-bal\* and tattva-gnan\*. A knowledgeable person who is weak minded is unable to overcome his faults, even though the tattva-gnan is complete in itself. Tattva-gnan is not the result of any karma, and nor does it give rise to any karma. However, during the period of spiritual effort, a person needs strength of mind to develop the qualities of shama-dama\* - नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन 'naayamaatmaa balaheene`na labhyah na me`dhayaa na bahunaa shrute`na.' A certain strength – derived by rigorous practice – is necessary for removing dehadhyas. Tattva-gnan is separate from both of them.

Descriptions of the rains, and autumn, follow this episode. The description in the Bhagwat is similar to the description in the Kishkindha Kand of Tulsidasji's Ramayana. These are descriptions of exceptional beauty, with great spiritual significance.

The Shrimad Bhagwat states that the beauty of Vrindavan was greatly enhanced in autumn. Shri Krishna began to play the flute when He went to graze the cows. Not only the Gopas and Gopis, but the entire Creation was enchanted by the sound of His flute.

The Shrimad Bhagwat has a whole chapter, of twenty verses, upon the Venu Geet\*. I suggest that you read them attentively. Such beauty of poetic literature is rare, even in Sanskrit. Shri Shukadevji Maharaj commences, by saying:

इत्थं शरत्स्वच्छजलं पद्माकरसुगन्धिना।

न्यविशद् वायुना वातं सगोगोपालकोऽच्युतः॥ १०.२१.१.

*Ithham sharatsvacchjalam padmaakara – sugandhinaa,*

*Nyavishad vaayunaa vaatam sagogopaalakoachyutah.*

*10.21.1.*

“Parikshit, with the coming of the Sharad ritu\*, Shri Krishna entered the forest with the cowherd boys. Padmas\* bloomed in the lakes, and a fragrant breeze blew gently.”

पद्माकरसुगन्धिना ‘*Padmaakarasugandhinaa*’ means that Padma\* would come, herself, to Vraja, and decorate each flower to ensure that the Lord did not forget her. She also desired to give Him pleasure, through the fragrance of her hands.

Look – what is the essence of Vrindavan? One is the mountain, Giriraj. Another is the flowing river, and the third is the lucid lake. The lucid lake is the heart of the Lord’s devotees. The river is the thought process which flows ceaselessly towards the Lord, and the Giriraj is the unshakable faith in the Lord. That means that in the seat of love, Vrindavan, the pure hearts of devotees, and their godly thoughts, help each other, and, their faith is rock steady.

कुसुमितवनराजिशुष्मभृगद्विजकुलघुष्टसरःसरिन्महीध्रम्।

मधुपतिरवगाह्य चारयन्ताः सहपशुपालबलश्चुकूज वेणुम्॥ १०.२१.२.

*Kusumitavanaraajishushmabhringadvijakulaghustasarahsarini maheeghrām,  
Madhupatiravagaahya chaarayangaah sahapashupaalabalashchukooja ve`num.  
10.21.2.*

Spring is called Madhu. Shri Krishna is the Madhupati – the Lord of Spring. So, His coming is heralded by the blooming of beautiful flowers, the buzzing of bees in the fresh green of trees, and the chirping of flocks of birds. The Lord of Spring, Shri Krishna, enters this beautiful forest, along with Balaramji and the cowherd boys, to graze the cows. When the Lord went into the forest, He played His flute. The sound was so sweet that hearing it, the Gopis were filled with ecstatic love.

There are many kinds of rasas\*. Those who consider the Lord their son, feel Vatsalya\*. Some call Vatsalya a rasa, and some call it a bhava\*. In the same way, Sakhya is considered a rasa by some, and a bhava by others. In Bhavabhuti’s opinion, only karuna is a rasa – एको रसः करुण एव ‘*e`ko rasah karuna e`va*’. Other rasas are only variations of ‘Karun’ rasa. The Sadhu-Mahatmas have said that the only rasa is the Shanta\* rasa – शान्तोऽपि नवमो रसः ‘*shaantopi navamo rasah*’.

Prem\* and Madhur\* are acknowledged romantic rasas. Shringar\* rasa is not just a rasa – it is the king of rasas. That is why Bhojraj has said, “I do not acknowledge any other emotion, except Shringar – शृंगार एव रसः ‘*shringaar e`va rasah*.’”

Now consider what the Gopis and Gopas are. Those who imbue the sweetness of Shri Krishna through their sense organs, are called Gopas and Gopis. They do not meditate, they do not apply their minds, they do not take up the position of being a sakshi\*, and nor do they decide that they are one with the Brahman. On the contrary, they imbue the sweetness of the Lord with open eyes, and other sense organs. That is why they are called Gopas and Gopis.

The Shruti\*, and the Vrittis, are called Gopis. So are the subtle nerve channels like the Ida and the Pingla. The ancient texts have defined them, but those who try to study the



texts without the guidance of a knowledgeable teacher, are not able to grasp the full purport.

All worldly desires of the Gopis were dispelled, when they heard the sound of the Lord's flute. Their hearts were filled only with a desire for Shri Krishna – वणुगीतं स्मरोदयम् 've`nugeetam smarodayam.' As soon as they thought of Shri Krishna, they craved to obtain Him. It was as though He came and stood before them, and they were saying, in their hearts:

बर्हापीडं नटवरवपुः कर्णयोः कर्णारं  
बिभ्रद्वासः कनककपिशं वैजयन्तीं च मालाम्।  
रन्ध्रान् वेणोरधरसुधया पूरयन् गोपवृन्दै-  
वृन्दारण्यं स्वपदरमणं प्राविशद् गीतकीर्तिः॥ १०.२१.५.

*Varhaapeedam natavaravapuh karnayoh karnikaaram  
Vibhradvaasah kanakakapisham vaijayanteem cha maalaam,  
Randhraan ve`noradharasudhayaa poorayan gopavrindai –  
Vrindaaranyam svapadaramanam praavishad geetakeertih.  
10.21.5.*

Shri Krishna is entering Vrindavan, with His companions. He wears a peacock feather on His head, and yellow flowers on His ears. A golden garment covers His body, and He wears the Vaijayanti Mala, which is a long, fragrant, multi-colored garland. He has dressed up as beautifully as a Hero in a play. He fills the holes of His flute with the nectar of His lips. The gwaal baals follow Him, singing His glories. Our land, called Vrindavan, is superior even to Vaikunth, and the Lord's footprints make it even more beautiful.

Now, how did Shri Krishna become बर्हापीड 'varhaapeedam' – the one with the peacock feathers on his head? It is said that while dancing with the pet peacock of Shri Radharani\*, a feather fell off from the peacock. Shri Krishna picked it up, and wore it on His head. Since then, He always wore peacock feathers on His head. This is how He was given the name of Varhapeda.

Shri Krishna is like the Hero of a play, like the bridegroom. The 'varenja'\* of the Gayatri Mantra has become the 'vara' here. That is what makes Him 'natavaravapu'\*. The word 'Ishwara'\* contains the root 'Isha', and the 'vara' is a suffix. The 'var' in Ishwara, means authority, so Ishwara is the Lord of the whole world, the husband of all. This form of Shri Krishna is a role, chosen by Him, but He is, without doubt, the undisputed Master.

The blue tinge of Shri Krishna is enhanced by the ornaments and garments which intersperse His body. The golden yellow garment He wears, is the color of Shri Radharani's complexion. He wears a vana mala\*, bracelets, armlets, and other

ornaments. As a result, the blueness of the exposed parts of His body, appears even lovelier. The nectar of Shri Krishna's lips – which pours into the holes of His flute – is not ordinary nectar. It is a divine elixir. That is why His flute sounds divine, too. His divinity is the reason for His footprints decorating Vrindavan. It is this, which makes Vrindavan superior (and more beautiful) than Vaikunth, which is the Lord's normal abode.

One Acharya (scholar) has written that when Shri Krishna goes to the forest, and sees the footprints of Shri Radharani, He covers them with His pitambar\*, to protect them from the heat of the sun.

What is Shri Radharani? A worshipper – अराधिका 'aaraadhikaa' – is called Radhika – सा राधिकाराधिका 'saa radhikaaraadhikaa.'

Vrindavan is a place of such love, that all the objects here – the vines and creepers, the trees and shrubs, animals and birds, even the grains of dust – are all worth contemplating upon. Contemplative objects can not be inanimate. They are chinmay\*. The music in the hearts of the Gopis becomes vocal. The passionate love which fills their hearts rises up to be expressed. The love may have been born by love-making, or by the pangs of separation, or by pathos – because the pangs of separation make a person pitiful. The Gopis, therefore, began to tell each other –

अक्षण्वतां फलमिदं न परं विदामः

सख्यः पशूननुविवेशयतोर्वयस्यैः।

वक्त्रं व्रजेशसुतयोरनुवेणु जुष्टं

यैर्वा निपीतमनुरक्तकटाक्षमोक्षम्॥ १०.२१.७.

*Akshanvataam falamidam na param vidaamah  
Sakhyah pashoonanuvive`shayatorvayasyaih,  
Vaktram vraje`shasutayoranuve`nu jushtam  
Yairvaa nipeetamanuraktakataakshamoksham.  
10. 21. 7.*

“My dear friend, the purpose of having eyes is not to witness. It is not meditation. Then – why have we been given eyes? Have we been given eyes to enable us to see the world? No, no! Not the world! We have been given eyes so that we can see Shyamsunder Shri Krishna. The purpose of having eyes is fulfilled only when we see Him.”

After this, the Gopis began to see Shri Krishna everywhere. They saw that the vines were oozing honey, when they heard the sound of Shri Krishna's flute. The Devis forgot themselves, the does stared unblinkingly, the cows forgot to graze, and the

calves forgot to suckle. Their bodies tingled with ecstasy, and they had tears in their eyes, and Govind in their hearts.

“Look – even the peacocks are dancing at the sound of the flute. Peace envelopes the entire atmosphere. The birds on the trees watch Shri Krishna with their eyes wide open. The water of the Yamuna is stilled – it has ceased to flow. She is presenting the lotus flowers to Shri Krishna, and the earth is ecstatic.

Oh, my friend! Is there any division of caste, and status, for Bhakti? No, of course not! Even the semi wild tribals are Bhaktas. Peacocks are Bhaktas, cows are Bhaktas, the earth is a Bhakta, and even the trees and creepers are Bhaktas. Bhakti abides where the Lord is, where His touch is, because it is the nature of every creature to love.

My friend, when Shri Krishna wears the cows’ nohana\* like a garland, and the rope to catch the cows with, on His head, like a cap, He looks so attractive that everybody stops moving. They stop and stare, as though the spirit which enables us to see and hear is temporarily stupefied.”

अस्पन्दनं गतिमतां पुलकस्तरूणां

निर्योगपाशकृतलक्षणयोविचित्रम्। १०.२१.१९.

*Aspardanam gatimataam pulakastaroonam*

*Niryoga – paashakritalakshanayovichitram. 10. 21. 19.*

The Gopis would thus spend their time talking and singing about the nature of Shri Krishna, while He was away in the forest. The devotees of the Lord always spend their time, when separated from Him, by singing His glories. This fills their hearts with a surge of love for the Lord.

Now, towards the end of autumn, in the season called Hemanta, the unmarried Gopis of Nanda’s Vraja started a vrat of Devi Katyayini\*. They would bathe in the Yamuna every morning, and pray, “Devi, we bow down to you – make Nanda nandan, Shri Krishna, our husband – नन्दगोपसुतं देवि पति मे कुरु ते नमः ‘nandagopasutam de`vi patim me` kuru te` namah.’”

Now comes the episode of ‘cheer haran’\*! Cheer haran means ‘avarana bhang’\* Please keep in mind that the experience of the indivisibility of the Brahman and the Atman occurs only after the false identification with the body is dispelled. Nobody can experience that the Atman and the Brahman are one, if this false impression continues. If a mother insists on hiding herself from her baby, telling him, “Don’t look at my breast, people will think I am shameless,” will she be able to feed him? What is her motherly love worth, if she refuses to feed her baby, and keeps herself covered? How can she experience the joys of maternal love, then? Neither she, nor her baby will experience happiness. In the same way, can a husband and wife experience conjugal bliss, if they keep their bodies covered and hidden from each other?

In precisely the same way, the curtain of Avidya stands between the Brahman and the jeeva. The experience of being one with the Brahman is not possible unless and until this veil is removed. The removal of all barriers is essential for the experience of the 'rasa'.

This is the reason why Shri Krishna removed the veil of ignorance, giving the excuse of stealing the Gopis' garments. He granted them the boon, "The wish in your hearts, for which you undertook the worship, will be granted. For the present, you must all return to your homes."

It should be remembered that Shri Krishna was not alone at the time of the cheer haran. Other cowherd boys were with Him, including the brothers and relatives of the Gopis, when He stole their clothes. Hence, their approval for the Raas Leela\* was won, and preparations began. However, the approval of many others had to be procured before the Raas Leela could take place. The Brahmins are the ones who have the books of religious strictures, and it is they who approve or oppose the religious and irreligious actions. Hence, it was necessary to impress them, and win their approval. The opportunity for this soon arose.

One day, Balaramji and Shri Krishna accompanied the gwaal baals and cows, going far from Vrindavan, towards Mathura. It was full summer, and the sun was unbearably hot. The trees, however, provided a cool shade. Shri Krishna spoke to the cowherd boys, praising the trees. "Friends," He said, "Look at these trees. Their entire life is spent in doing good to others. They tolerate the wind, rain, and sun, but protect us from the harsh elements. All creatures are served by them. Nobody coming near them ever returns empty handed – they are sure to give something. Their leaves, fruit, flowers, shade, roots, wood, ashes, coals, etc. – are all used to meet the needs of the people. Theirs is the most superior life."

Talking in this manner, Shri Krishna, Balaramji, the gwaal baals and the cows went towards the bank of the Yamuna. The cows drank deeply, and so did the young men.

Some of gwaal baals came up to Shri Krishna and Balaramji. "Drinking water is not enough," they said. "We are extremely hungry, so give us some food." Shri Krishna said, "Since you are so hungry, do as I say. Just a little way off, the learned Brahmins of Mathura are doing a Yagya. Go there. Tell them Dau Dada's name, and My name, and say that we have asked for food."

As per Shri Krishna's advice, the gwaal baals went to the place where the Yagya was being held. They told the Brahmins, "Rama and Krishna are waiting just a short distance away. They are hungry, so please give us some food. We know that we should not consume the food from a place where an animal is sacrificed, but there is nothing wrong in having food from your Yagya."

दीक्षायाः पशुसंस्थायाः सौत्रामण्याश्च सत्तमाः ।

अन्यत्र दौक्षितस्यापि नान्नमश्नन् हि दुष्यति ।। १०.२३.८.

*Deekshaayaah pashusansthaayaah sautraamanyaashcha sattamah,  
Anyatra deekshitasyaapi naannamashnan hi dushyati.*

10. 23. 8

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj says, “Parikshit, these Brahmins failed to remember that it was the Lord of the universe, who was asking them for food! They considered Rama-Krishna to be ordinary mortals, and did not show adequate respect. Actually, these Brahmins had the mentality of ignorant children, but considered themselves to be very learned and wise. So, they did not respond to the gwaal baals in any way. The cowherd boys returned dejected, and told Rama-Krishna all that had transpired.”

न ते यदोमिति प्रोचूर्न नेति च परन्तप ।

गोपा निराशाः प्रत्येत्य तथोचुः कृष्णरामयोः ॥ १०.२३.१२.

*Na te` yadomiti prochurna ne`ti cha parantapa,  
Gopaa niraashaah praty`tya tathochuh krishnaraamayoh.*

10.23. 12.

Now, see the messages we get from this episode. One is that if the people living around us are hungry, while ablution after ablution is poured into the ritual fire, then the yagya is not in keeping with the strictures of Dharma. Yagya is not to be undertaken if people have to go hungry. It is also written in the Manusmriti\* that we should undertake a Yagya only when we have enough wealth to support servants, employees, relatives and the family, for three years.

Another point, worth noting, is that the Brahmins avoided replying to the gwaal baals. What does this mean? It means that there are two paths to salvation for humans. One is to acquiesce, by saying Oum. The other is to deny, by saying ‘ne`ti, ne`ti’\*, because the entire Creation is nothing but the essence of the Oum form of the Lord – ॐकार एव सर्वम् ‘omkaara e`va sarvam’. This is elaborated upon and emphasized universally.

When the gwaal baals returned empty handed, and narrated everything, Shri Krishna first had a good laugh. Then He said, “Now, go to the wives of the Brahmins. Give them My name, and ask for food. They are sure to oblige. You will not have to return empty handed.”

The gwaal baals went to the wives of the Brahmins. When they heard what they boys had to say, their hearts overflowed with love. They wasted no time in going to Shri Krishna with all kinds of food. They obtained a vision of the Lord, which was so fantastic that Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu fainted with ecstasy when he heard its description. You may enjoy the flavor in the words of Shri Shukadevji:

श्यामं हिरण्यपरिधि वनमाल्यबर्हधातुप्रवालनटवेषमनुव्रतांसे ।  
विन्यस्तहस्तमितरेण धुनानमब्जं कर्णोत्पलालककपोलमुखाब्जहासम् ॥ १०.२३.२२.

*Shyamam hiranyaparidhi vanamaalyabarhadhaatupravaala –  
Natave`shamanuvrataanse`,  
Vinyastahastamitare`na dhunaanamabjam  
Karnotpalaalakakapola – mukhaabjahaasam.  
10. 23. 22.*

The Yagya patinees, wives of the Brahmins, saw that Shri Krishna's blue-hued form was covered with a glimmering pitambar. He wore the vanamala\*, and a mor mukut\* on His head. He was dressed like a Hero on the stage, with clusters of flower buds hanging on His body. One hand rested on the shoulder of His friend, and He held a lotus in the other one. He wore earrings of fresh flowers. His curls touched His cheeks charmingly, and a faint smile lingered on His lips.

The Yagya patnees were enthralled by this divine sight. They served food to Shri Krishna, Balaram, and the gwaal baals. Then they eulogized Shri Krishna, received His Grace, and returned to the place where the Yagya was being held.

When the Brahmins learnt how deeply spiritual was the love of their wives, for Shri Krishna, they began to berate themselves. "Of what use is all our knowledge?" they lamented. "Our noble lineage and high caste are valueless, because we are turned away from the Lord! We have no depth of feeling, or Bhakti. What is the use of our life? We are so wretched that we refused to give food to Him, who is our all in all!"

धिग् जन्म नस्त्रिवृद्विद्यां धिग् व्रतं धिग् बहुज्ञताम् ।  
धिक् कुलं धिक् क्रियादाक्ष्यं विमुखा ये त्वधोक्षजे ॥ १०.२३.३९.

*Dhig janma nastrivrdvidyaam dhig vratam dhig bahugyataam,  
Dhig kulam dhik kriyaadaakshyam vimukhaa ye`tvagshokshaje`.  
10. 23. 39.*

The gwaal baals and Gopa-kumaris\*, were all ready for the Raas Leela. Now, even the Brahmins became favorable. Shri Krishna then decided that the Devtas should also be made favorable. To facilitate this, the bright fortnight – Shuklapaksha – of the lunar month of Kartik, arrived. Preparations commenced for the ritual worship of Indra – the King of the Devtas.

Maiya dressed up her darling children, Shyam\* and Balaram, with special care. She put on a tilak\* of gorochan\*, and placed pitambaras over their shoulders. Then she said, "My sons, go and bow down to your father." Both the boys went, and bowed down to Nandababa. The Shri Krishna asked lovingly, "Baba, what is all this preparation for?"

Nandababa said, “My son, this is the day we worship Indra. It has been the family tradition for many generations. We believe that we get the rains by the Grace of Indra. Because of the rain, we get food – which enables us and our cattle to survive. This is why we worship Indra.”

“Baba,” persisted Shri Krishna, “What kind of tradition is this? The Indra of Heaven lives in Heaven. We have never even seen him. We have no Kingdom, nor any city. We do not even have a village! We are vanavasis\*, and live at the foot of the Giriraj\*.

न नः पुरो जनपदा न ग्रामा न गृहा वयम्।

नित्यं वनौकसस्तात वनशैलनिवासिनः॥ १०.२४.२४.

*Na nah puro janapadaa na graaman na grihaa vayam,*

*Nityam vanaukasastaat vanashailanivaasinah.*

10. 24. 24.

Therefore, our Devta is the Giriraj. It is the mountain who gives us fruits and food. It is Giriraj, who our cattle graze upon. Then, why don’t you worship Giriraj instead?”

Shri Krishna convinced Nandababa by His reasoning. All the other Gopas also agreed with Shri Krishna. He was ready to shatter Indra’s vanity, of having powers of destruction. Nandababa and the gwaals used the items of worship, which they had prepared for Indra’s worship, to worship the Giriraj.

Now, note that although Shri Krishna seemed just a child, He is, here, the Lord incarnate. He is an exception. You have been told earlier, that if even a child says something which is rational and relevant, we should accept the suggestion. Our scriptures have stated that Dharma is harmed when even elders speak irreligiously – युक्तिहीनविचारेषु धर्महानिः प्रजायते ‘Yuktiheenavichaare`shu dharmahaanih prajaayate’. So, the older generation should never claim greater experience and knowledge, to discard a good suggestion made by a youngster.

See for yourself, how revolutionary was the step taken by Shri Krishna. He rejected the Indra puja. And, what was the result? Indra’s real form was exposed before all the people of Vraja, and his inflated ego was shattered.

It has been seen that when people get used to receiving gifts and tokens of respect, they get so habituated to this, that they are distressed if this is curtailed. They get angry, thinking, “Why wasn’t I given gifts and respect this time?” They do not realize that gifts and respect are a token of the reverence which is in the heart of the one who gives them. The receiver has no right to expect either respect, or any gift.

Indra had begun to accept the worship of the Vrajavasis, as his due. When he was not given this worship, he got angry with them. A perfect example arose, of how anger blinds one – whether it is a human being, or a demi-god. Indra angrily ordered the rain

clouds to destroy all the cows and animals in Vraja – पशून् नयत संक्षयम् ‘*pashoon nayata sankshyam*’.

Oh, God! The cows were to be punished for the fault of the Gopas! Indra’s anger overcame his sense of justice, and so he ordered the pralaykari\* clouds to attack Vraja.

The clouds began to pour sheets of water over Vraja. Lightening flashed all round. The windswept rain worsened. Large chunks of hail fell from the sky. The Vrajavasis were terrified. They surrendered to Shri Krishna, begging Him to protect them. The Lord said, “Do not worry. Come under the Govardhan\*.” Saying this, He lifted the mountain.

You may have read the story of Subandhu in the Rig Veda. It is stated there, that the hand of a human is Ishwara, it is even greater than the Ishwara – अयं मे हस्तो भगवान्, अयं मे हस्तो भगवत्तरः ‘*ayam me` hasto bhagavaan, ayam me` hasto bhagavattarah.*’

This means that a person who has hands (the ability to act) does not need to look up to God, and ask Him to do this or that. My friend, use your hand, and offer all you do, to the Lord.

This is exactly what Shri Krishna did, showing Indra His hand, and sending the unspoken message, “You want to harass the Vrajavasis? Then see how I place the mountain on your head!” He did this because the Devta, Indra, abides in the hands. The Lord wanted to shatter Indra’s vanity, so He lifted up the mountain, and placed it on the tip of the organ of action – the hand – which symbolizes Indra. Then He said, “Now, Sonny, lift this! Not I, but you lift the mountain. Not only that, keep it lifted until your ego is shattered to smithereens!”

Indra felt ashamed. He ordered the clouds to cease raining, and Vraja was saved. All of you know the story.

When Shri Krishna had held the Govardhan up for seven days at a stretch, the gwaal baals said, “Kanhaiya, you have not had any rest at all. You have held up the mountain on one hand. Your hand must be paining. Shift the mountain to Shridama’s hand for a while. Allow us to massage this left hand of yours, to help the blood circulation. If you feel that this suggestion is insulting to you, then don’t give the mountain to him – just shift it to your right hand. This will allow your left hand to get some rest.”

Shri Krishna said, “My brothers, please don’t worry about Me. If you insist on helping, just prop up the mountain with your wooden staffs – that will be helpful to Me.”

That is why, whenever the gwaal baals got angry, they’d say, “See here, Kanhaiya. You did not lift the Giriraj all by yourself. We also lent a helping hand by propping our staffs to help you.”



This proves that to obtain the Grace of God, people need to put in an effort. A sadhak cannot progress without this.

When his ego was shattered, Indra came with the Kamadhenu\*. He eulogized the Lord, and crowned Him as Govind, or Upendra\*. Kamadhenu, however, maintained that Indra may be the Indra (King) of the Devtas; the cows did not accept him as their Indra. Since that day, the Indra of the cows is the Lord Incarnate Govind-Gopal, and not the Indra of heaven.

The Devtas naturally became favorable after this, and so did all the Gopas. At about the same time, one more incident occurred, which enhanced Shri Krishna's image further.

It so happened that one morning, Nandababa woke up very early, and went to the Yamuna for a bath. It was the twelfth lunar date, and Nandababa wished to complete his vrat of the eleventh day, on time. He had not, therefore, gone against the rules of the rituals by bathing so early. The critics are quite right in stating that Nandababa's Yamuna snaan\* was perfectly in order.

The demon who lived there, however, caught hold of Nandababa, and took him to the land of Varuna Devta. The news spread all over Vraja, that Nandababa had been drowned in the Yamuna, while bathing. A wave of grief spread over all the people in Vraja. Shri Krishna knew what had happened. He jumped into the Yamuna, and reached the Varuna loka\*. Varuna welcomed Shri Krishna with full honors. Nandababa was very much there. He was flabbergasted to see the demigod worship Shri Krishna. "Oh!" he thought, "My son is so great that the demigods worship him!"

Shri Krishna returned to Vraja with Nandababa. When the gwaal baals heard this, they were displeased with Shri Krishna. They taunted Him, saying, "Nandababa is your father, so you pretended that he was drowning, and took him to see the Varuna loka; but you did not show us this land!"

Shri Krishna said, "All right, friends. Don't be upset. Come, I will show you a place which is even better." He took all the gwaal baals to Vaikunth. Once there, Shri Krishna sat on His own throne, and all the cowherd boys sat around, watching. They saw Brahmaji eulogizing Shri Krishna on one side, and on the other side, Shankarji sat in deep meditation. Laxmiji's condition was such that she trembled lest the Lord be displeased.

The gwaal baals asked, "How do we reach our Shri Krishna?"

"You cannot go near Him," they were told.

The gwaal baals retorted, "All right, if we can't go near him, tell us – where is his flute? Where is his mor mukut? Where is his cane? We cannot see any of these."

Not receiving any reply, the gwaal baals said, "What will we do here, in this place? We prefer to live in Vraja." They returned to Vraja with Shri Krishna.

Thus having impressed everybody, and having made them all favorable, the great day came, when the Raas Leela took place. Shri Shukadevji Maharaj began to describe it thus:

भगवानपि ता रात्रीः शरदोत्फुल्लमल्लिकाः ।

वीक्ष्य रन्तुं मनश्चक्रे योगमायामुपाश्रितः ॥ १०.२९.१.

*Bhagwaanapi taa raatreeh sharadotfullamallikaah,*

*Veekshya rantum manashchakre`yogamaayaamupaashritah.*

10. 29. 1.

You see, the word ‘Raas’, means the total of all the rasas\*. Shri Krishna is the personification of all types of joys – रसानां समूहो रासः। रास एव रासः। रसो वै सः। रसं लब्ध्वा आनन्दी भवति ‘*rasaanaam samoooho raasah. Rasa e`va raasah. Raso vai sah. Rasam labdhvaa aanandee bhavati.*’

One day, Shri Krishna felt that He should spread and increase His essence of Bliss. When He saw that there was no scope for this, in either Time, or Space, He said, “All right, I will imbue it by Myself, but increase the numbers through which Bliss is imbued. The more people imbuing the Bliss, the more the Bliss will spread and increase.” In keeping with this decision, Shri Krishna had created the Gopis, and the Gopas, and the Divine Vrindavan.

The Raas Leela is not an ordinary Leela. The renunciation of the Gopis has been described, before the Leela took place. The Gopis had given up all worldly considerations, before they went to Shri Krishna. Shri Krishna proffered the arguments of the Poorva Meemansa philosophy, and the rigid strictures of orthodox religion. He took up a stand of rejecting their coming thus, to Him. The Gopis, however, countered with arguments from the Uttar Meemansa philosophy. Shri Krishna was placed in the position of upholding the first philosophy, while the Gopis took the stand of the Upanishads. This philosophy is not subject to the dictates of the previous, narrower strictures. The Gopis said,

मैवं विभोर्हति भवान् गदितुं नृशंसं

सन्त्यज्य सर्वविषयांस्तव पादमूलम् ।

भक्ता भजस्व दुरवग्रह मा त्यजास्मान्

देवो यथाऽऽदिपुरुषो भजते मुमुक्षून् ॥ १०.२९.३१.

*Mayivam vibhorhati bhavaan gaditum nrishamsam*

*Santyaaja sarvavishayaanstava paadamoolam,*

*Bhaktaa bhajasva duravagraha maa tyajaasmaan*

*De`vo yathaadipurusho bhajate`mumukshoon.*

10. 29. 31.

This is the love song of the Gopis. In these verses they have revealed their innermost feelings. “Shri Krishna, without You, we have no life in us, and no life to live.”

Restrictions of time do not permit a detailed description of all that the Gopis said. You can read it in the original, and understand its relevance and depth. I will only say that Shri Krishna – who is everybody’s Atma – accepted the Gopis, when He saw the exquisite agony they felt. He began to play with them. He arranged that every Gopi could simultaneously experience the Bliss of this play.

As they frolicked with the Lord, the Gopis began to think themselves superior to all other women in the world – this was a mistake. It is a lapse, if we focus upon anything other than the object of our love. It is an obstacle on the path of love, if our focus shifts from the one we love, to any other; or even ourselves. In other words, our focus should be only upon the Paramatma. It should not be allowed to shift on the ‘Aham’\*, or Idam\*. The same principal applies to tattvagnan. If the Aham is in sharp focus, then the Brahman is known by the method of Mukhya Samanadhikaran\*, but if Creation is considered to be an illusion, then the Brahman is known by negating both the Aham and the Idam, through the method of Badh Samanadhikaran\*, to dispel the illusion which rests upon the sub-stratum of the ultimate Reality, the essence of Creation.

So, when the Gopis began to think about their individuality, while frolicking with Shri Krishna, it turned into an obstacle in the Raas. Shri Krishna noticed that the Gopis’ focus had shifted from Him, to their own small selves. He vanished from view, with the intention of destroying their vanity and pride –

तासां तत् सौभगमदं वीक्ष्य मानं च केशवः ।

प्रशमाय प्रसादाय तत्रैवान्तधीयत ।। १०.२९.४८.

*Taasaam tat saubhagamadam veekshya maanam cha ke`shavah,*

*Prashamaaya prasaadaaya tatraivaantaradheeyata.*

10.29.48

When a person starts looking at his own, small self, he loses sight of the indivisible Paramatma. Whether you see the conditioned ‘other’ (called Idam), or whether you see the individual I (called Aham), no conditioned individual exists, apart from the basic sub-stratum of the ultimate Reality. That, which appears to glimmer in the sub-stratum of the essence (ultimate reality), is actually an illusion. It is not real. So, when the Gopis started to look at themselves, they could no longer see Shri Krishna. Then, they became desperate.

You see, a person’s life contains both viraha\* and sanyog\*. Sanyog causes pleasure, and viraha causes pain. However, viraha contains love. So, of course, does sanyog. The Gopis showed us, through the way they lived, how to be with the Lord in both situations.

When Shri Krishna vanished from sight, the Gopis felt desperate. At first they went about asking the trees and plants, if they knew where Shri Krishna had gone. Then, they began to act out His Leelas, as though they had lost their senses. Then, when they found Shri Radharani, the thought occurred to them, “If we go on looking for Shri Krishna, He will continue to run away from us. This will cause Him discomfort.” So, all the Gopis gathered on the bank of the Yamuna, and started singing the song, which has become famous as the ‘Gopi Geet’\*.

This Gopi Geet is descriptive poetry. It conjures up word pictures, because of the rules of the metre. The seventh letter is usually the same as the first letter, and generally the others match, as well. This particular metre is called Kanakamanjari’. You can enjoy hearing a portion of the Gopi Geet.

जयति तेऽधिकं जन्मना व्रजः श्रयत इन्दिरा शश्वदत्र हि ।

दयति दृश्यतां दिक्षु तावकास्त्वयि धृतासवस्त्वां विचिन्वते ॥ १०.३१.१.

*Jayati te`dhikam janmanaa vrajah shrayata indiraa shashvadatra hi,  
Dayita drishyataam dikshu taavakaastvayi dhritaasavastvaam vichinvate`.*  
10.31.1

The Gopis say, “Beloved Shri Krishna, Your manifestation has enhanced Vraja’s greatness. You have protected us from a number of perils. Today, however, You are killing us with your eyes – is this not slaughter? Please, allow Yourself to be glimpsed, just once, before we die. You are not just the son of a Gopi – You are the actual Paramatma, who abides in all hearts. Please, do give us a vision of Your lotus-like face, and touch us with Your lotus-like feet. Place Your hand upon our heads. Give us a taste of the nectar of Your lips. We have survived only by listening to the talk about You. We cannot survive even for a moment without You.

प्रहसितं प्रिय प्रेमवीक्षणं विहरणं च ते ध्यानमंगलम् ।

रहसि संविदो या हृदिस्पृशः कुहक नो मनः क्षोभयन्ति हि ॥ १०.३१.१०.

*Prahasitam priya pre`maveekshanam viharanam cha te`dhyaanamangalam,  
Rahasi samvido yaa hridisprishah kuhaka no manah kshobhayanti hi.*  
10.31.10.

Dearest, we are enthralled by Your face, so full of love; by Your upraised hand, and by Your sweet words. Our grief is caused by the fact that You are hiding in the dark, and may be hurt by a thorn pricking Your foot, or a sharp blade of grass cutting Your tender feet. Our hearts are bursting with the pain of this possibility. You are our life, You are our life’s spirit, and You are our whole world.”

When the Gopis sobbed their hearts out, lamenting in this manner, Shri Krishna manifested again. He did not descend from a tree or a mountain. Nor did He arise from the Yamuna, because He had been hidden in their midst all the while.

तासामाविरभूच्छौरिः स्मयमानमुखाम्बुजः ।

पीताम्बरधरः स्रग्वी साक्षान्मन्मथमन्मथः ॥ १०.३२.२.

*Taasaamaavirabhoocchaurih smayamaanamukhaambujah,*  
*Peetambaradharah sragvee saakshaanmanmathamanmathah.*  
*10.32.2.*

Shri Krishna smilingly told the Gopis, “Oh, Gopis, My feelings for you are on My face, and I am all smiles. But – how much you harassed Me every day! I just hid Myself for a while today, and see how upset you got! Now, you must never again show any sign of ego.”

The Gopis welcomes Shri Krishna lovingly, showing Him full respect. They spread out their odhnis\* on the bank of the Yamuna, to make a soft seat for the Lord. They asked Shri Krishna to be seated upon it. Then they began to speak to Him about love. The next episode will be described tomorrow.

Om Shantih! Shantih! Shantih!

## BHAGWATAMRIT

### Pravarchan XI

#### (Chapter X)

Loving meditation of God includes meditating upon those who have loved the Lord, and received His Grace. So much so, that the meditation includes even the trees and vines touched by Him, and the ground He trod. Objects of meditation are never inanimate or material – they are objects of meditation. That is why they are called ‘chinmay’\*. The world of the senses (used for worldly interaction) transports us to a unique, divine world. That is why meditation is considered to be of great importance.

Come, let us go to Vrindavan’s world of divine love, where – as per yesterday’s talk – the Lord, Shri Krishna, sits on the bank of the Yamuna, in eager anticipation of the Raas Leela. The Lord there is not nirguna; He is saguna. He is not nirakar, He is sakar. And, He is not a Devta, He is in human form; but that form is beautiful in every aspect! The asana\* which the Gopis picture in their hearts, is not His seat. His seat is the pile of odhnis\*, which have been worn by them, and are now laid, one upon the other, for Him to sit upon. The fabric is damp with their tears, and it carries the stains of the sandal paste and saffron, which they smear their chests with. It is this asana, which has been spread out for the Lord to sit upon. Where in the world will the Lord find such an asana? Seated upon this asana, is the pitambardhari\*, murlimanohar\*, mor mukuti\* Vrajaraj Kumar\*. Some Gopis hold His feet, and some hold His hands in theirs – they are making sure that He does not escape again!

The Gopis now wanted to place some questions to the Lord. Just as an urge to question is important in the quest of knowledge, it is equally important for the Rasa-vidya\*. The Gopis asked, “Beloved Shyamsundar, there are some who love those who love them. Some, who love even those who do not love them. And, there are some who feel no love for either of them. Tell us, which are the most superior?”

भजतोऽनुभजन्त्येक एक एतद्विपर्ययम्।

नोभयांश्च भजन्त्येक एतन्नो ब्रुहि साधु भोः॥ १०.३२.१६.

*Bhajatonubhajantye`ka e`ka e`tadviparyayam,*

*Nobhayaanshcha bhajantye`ka e`tanno bruhi saadu bhoh. 10. 32. 16.*

Shri Krishna replied, “Gopis, listen! Those who love, in return of love, are worldly people. Those who love even those who don’t return their love, are Parents, and Saints. Their love rises from innate compassion, and remains unaffected, whether it is returned or not. Such love encompasses everybody. As for those who love neither the people who love them, nor those who don’t – you must gauge their level yourselves.

भजतोऽपि न वै केचिद् भजन्त्यभजतः कुतः।

आत्मारामा ह्याप्तकामा अकृतज्ञा गुरुद्रुहः॥ १०.३२.१९.

*Bhajatopi na vai ke`chid bhajantyabhajatah kutah,  
Aatmaaraamaa hyaaptakaamaa akritagyaa gurudruhah.  
10. 32. 19.*

The ones, who love neither, are of four kinds. One kind, are those who are immersed in deep meditation. They are completely unaware of who loves them, and who doesn’t. The second kind, are those who have attained the Paramatma, but interact in the world, constantly seeing the Lord in all. They have equanimity for everyone. The third kind are those who have no idea as to who loves them and who doesn’t. They are insane. The fourth kind, are the ‘gurudruha’ – the terribly wicked – who love neither those who love them, nor those who don’t love them. They are completely selfish and continue to give sorrow to others.”

The Gopis began to look at each other. “Friend, which kind is our Shyamsundar? He is not an Atmaram, blissfully immersed in His Atma. He is not an aaptakama, having no desires whatsoever. Nor is He kritagnya – full of ingratitude. Then, which type is He? Is He terribly wicked, that He does not love us, even though we love Him?” Answering the questions put to Him by the Gopis, Shri Krishna caught His dupatta\* in His hands, and said:

नाहं तु सख्यो भजतोऽपि जन्तून् भजाम्यमीषामनुवृत्तिवृत्तये।

यथाधनो लब्धधने विनष्टे तच्चिन्तयान्यन्निभृतो न वेद॥ १०.३२.२०.

*Naa hum tu sakhyo bhajatopi jantun bhajaamyameeshaamanuvrittivrittaye`  
Yathaadhano labdhthane` vinashte` tacchintayaanyannibhrito na ve`da.  
10. 32. 20.*

Gopis, I am not like what you think. I do not love those who love Me, just to ensure that people’s love does not remain superficial. I want it to enter the core of their hearts, into every part of their bodies.”

Clarifying this further, Shri Krishna explained the matter to the Gopis, by giving the example of a poor man who is overjoyed at the unexpected attainment of great wealth. He gets attached to his wealth, and begins to love it. What would his condition be, were he to lose it suddenly? He would be as poor as he used to be. However, he would not be able to accept that poverty again. He would suffer.

“In the same way, when I leave someone, after meeting them, My purpose is to increase their love for Me. I disappear, after appearing before people, in order to become established more firmly in their hearts, and manifest there.

न पारयेऽहं निरवद्यसंयुजां स्वसाधुकृत्यं विबुधायुषापि वः।

या माभजन् दुर्जरगेहश्रृंखलाः संवृश्च्य तद् वः प्रतियातु साधुना॥ १०.३२.२२.

*Na paaraye`ham niravadyasanyujaam svasaadhukrityam vibudhaayushaapi vah,*

*Yaa maabhajan durjarage`hashrunkhalaaha samvrishchya tad vah pratiyaatu saadhunaa.*

10. 32. 22.

My beloved Gopis, you gave up this world for Me, gave up your other world for Me, and gave up all self-interest. You gave up everything, and just loved Me. Your love should not be left unripe. – it should now be fully ripened. This is why I gave you viyog. The fulfillment of sanyog remains incomplete without the experience of the pangs of separation.

न विना विप्रलम्भेन सम्भोगो पुष्टिमश्नुते।

*Na vinaa vipralambhe`na sambhogo pushtimashnute`.*

Regarding Myself. I am indebted to you, Gopis! Even if I added Brahmaji’s life span to My own, godly, life span, and tried My best to repay your debt all through eternity, I shall fail to do so.”

Hearing such talk from Shri Krishna, Himself, the pain of separation vanished from the hearts of the Gopis. And, the nritya\* of the Raas began. This Raas nritya has three forms. In the first one, Shri Krishna is one, and the Gopis are many. Which means, there is one Krishna, and many Gopis. This is called the ‘Halleesaka Nritya’. In the language of Drama, just one Krishna dances to the beat, with such speed, that each Gopi feels that he is dancing with her.

In the second form of the Raas nritya, there are two Gopis, with one Krishna – तासां मध्ये द्वयोर्द्वयोः ‘taasaam madhye`dvayordvayoh’. In this, each Gopi has a



hand of Shri Krishna on her shoulder. One is to His left and the other, to His right. This contains no illusion of rasa\*.

In the third form, there are as many Krishnas as Gopis, because He uses His yogic powers to manifest in that many forms.

कृत्वा तावन्तमात्मानं यावतीर्गोपयोषितः ।

*Kritvaa taavantamaatmaanam yaavateergopayoshitah.*

Note the Adhyatmik form of the third kind of Raas nritya. It is as though a seeker of the ultimate truth were to study Vedanta, listen to discourses and ponder deeply upon them. Then, he undertakes the practice of nididhyaasan\*. He would get flashes of being one with the Brahman – ब्रह्मकार वृत्ति ‘brahmaakaar vritti’ – one after another, with gaps of normal awareness in-between. This is the experience in this dance. The meeting point of the two emotions of ब्रह्मकारा ‘bhaavaakaara’\*, and ब्रह्मकार ‘brahmaakaar’\* is the Brahman which has become the Raas nritya.

पादन्यासैर्भुजविधुतिभिः सस्मितैर्भ्रूविलासै –

भ्रज्यन्मध्येश्चलकुचपटैः कुण्डलैर्गण्डलोलैः ।

स्विद्यन्मुख्यः कबररशनाग्रन्थयः कृष्णवध्वो

गायन्त्यस्तं तडित इव ता मेघचक्रे विरेजुः ॥ १०.३३.८.

*Paadanyaasairbhujavidhutibhih sasmitairbhroovilaasair  
Bhjyanmadhaishchalakuchapataih kundalairgandalolaih,  
Svidyanmukhyah kabarashanaagranthayah krishnavadhvo  
Gaayantyastam tadita iva taa me`ghachakre`vire`juh.  
10. 33. 8.*

The steps of the dancing Gopis fall back and forth. Sometimes, they smile, and sometimes they move their eyebrows. Their waists twist as they dance, and their garments slip and slither. Their earrings touch their cheeks, as they swing to the rhythm. Beads of perspiration glisten on their faces, caused by their energetic dancing. The darling Gopis of the Natavara\* Nandalal\* are thus singing and dancing with the Lord. It is as though Shri Krishna’s forms are like dark clouds, and the fair Gopis in-between, shine like lightening.

Who are the Gopis? They are the wives of Shri Krishna. They carry His weight – वहन्ति इति वध्वः ‘vahanti iti vadhvah’. Shri Krishna goes wherever the Gopis go. The one who binds, is also called ‘vadhoo’\* - वध्नन्ति इति वध्वः ‘vadhnnanti iti vadhvah’. A vadhoo is the one who binds her husband with her arms, and bears his weight.

So, the entire Creation is amazed at the sight of Shri Krishna's nritya with the Gopis. All the conjugal stances described in the Kama Shastra\* appear here. Everything goes on, but Shri Krishna is blissful within Himself. He is supremely unaffected, because He is 'avikaari'\*. He imprisoned Kama, before organizing the Raas vilas\*.

Shri Krishna sent the Gopis back to their homes, when the pleasures of the Raas were completed. At this point, Parikshit had some doubts, and he asked, "How can the Raas vilas of the Lord be explained within the framework of the protection of Dharma?"

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj replied, "You see, Shri Krishna manifested as a human, in order to attract all the creatures of the world towards Him. Hence, what would this Leela of His be worth, unless the liberated as well as those susceptible to worldly passions, were both attracted to Him?"

The very purpose of this Avatar was to draw every creature towards Himself, regardless of their position or condition. Those attracted to luxuries, would be attracted to the luxurious Shri Krishna. Those attracted to material objects, would be attracted by His riches. Those filled with desire would be attracted by His love, and the jeevanmuktas\* would be attracted to Him as their own Atma. The descent of the Lord is with the intention of entrancing everybody, with love for the Lord, instead of for worldly objects. However – beware! No human should ever – even in his imagination – think of emulating Shri Krishna's Leelas. Because, anyone attempting to imbue poison, like Shankarji did, will be killed" –

नैतत् समाचरेज्जातु मनसापि ह्यनीश्वरः ।

विनश्यत्याचरन् मौढ्याद्यथा रुद्रोऽब्धिजं विषम् ॥ १०.३३.३१.

*Naitat samaachare `jjaatu manasaapi hyaneeshawarah,  
Vinashyatyaacharan maudhyaadyathaa rudrobdhijam visham.*

10. 33. 31.

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj added that after a jeeva obtains tattvagnan, he becomes a jeevanmukta. No further bondage of action remains. Then, when we speak of the one who has never been bound by actions, and never will be, is it not an illusion to imagine the bondage of the Lord?

यत्पादपंकजपरागनिषेवतृप्ता योगप्रभावविधुताखिलकर्मबन्धाः ।

स्वैरं चरन्ति मुनयोऽपि न नह्यमानास्तस्येच्छयाऽऽत्तवपुषः कुत एव बन्धः ॥ १०.३३.३५.

*Yatpadapankajaparaaganishe `vatriptaa  
yogaprabhaavavidhutaakhilakarmabandhaah,*

*Svairam charanti munayopi na nahyamaanaastasye`chchayaattavapushah  
kuta e`va bandhah.*

10. 33. 35.

In the end, Shri Shukadevji speaks of the reward of listening to the Raas Leela. He says that whoever hears, or sees – with faith – the frolics of Shri Krishna with the women of Vraja, and believes in its authenticity as its being a play of the Lord Incarnate, finds himself free of all desire. He obtains the highest kind of Bhakti.

विक्रीडितं व्रजबधूभिरिदं च विष्णोः

श्रद्धान्वितोऽनुश्रुत्यादथ वर्णयेद् यः।

भक्तिं परां भगवति प्रतिलभ्य कामं

हृद्रोगमाश्वपहिनोत्यचिरेण धीरः॥ १०.३३.४०.

*Vikreeditam vrajavadhooobhiridam cha vishnoh  
Shraddhaanvitonushrunuyaadatha varnaye`d yah,  
Bhaktim paraam bhagavati pratilabhya kaamam  
Hridrogamaashvapahinotyachire`na dheerah.*

10. 33. 40.

There is no harm in emphasizing repeatedly, that the Lord undertook such a frolic, so that even the most lustful and romantic persons would be attracted to Him. It was done with the purpose of shifting people's focus from worldly attractions to divine attractions. It was to develop detachment towards worldly objects, without even dwelling upon their evils; without even needing to use discrimination.

If detachment can be developed by the application of vivek, using the 'Tvam padartha'\*, why can't it be developed by using the 'Tat padartha'\*? When we contemplate upon the meaning of the term 'Tvam' (You), we get detached from the world. Similarly, when we contemplate upon the meaning of the term 'Tat' (That), our mental focus shifts from the material to the Lord. The discrimination between the eternal and the transitory, which is in the 'You' factor, is the same as the discrimination in the 'That' factor, and this discrimination is called Bhakti. (N.B. This is a reference to the Vedic sentence, Tat-tvam-asi, or tattvamasi, meaning 'You are That'. It indicates the oneness of the individual soul and the Brahman) When one discriminates between the Atma-anatma\*, we can manage, even if we lack shraddha\*. However, when it comes to discriminating about Ishwara, and accepting the unseen Lord, the shraddha is needed. Parabhakti\* comes from this shraddha, and the disease-like desires of the heart are dispelled by Parabhakti.

The Vrajavasis toured the Ambika van\*, after the Maha Raas\*. There, they worshipped the Pashupati\* Shankar and the Devi. A huge python lived in the forest, and he caught hold of Nandababa. Nandababa was terrified. Ultimately, Shri Krishna liberated this enormous snake by touching it with His foot. The python was a Vidyadhara\* in his past life. He had become a python because of a curse from some Rishi. He eulogized Shri Krishna. After that, everybody returned to Vraja, singing the praises of Shri Krishna. At the advent of spring, both the brothers – Balaramji and Shri Krishna – began to dance. The Gopis were entranced to see them, and began to sing and dance with them. This routine became so well established that it continues to this day. The Ahirs\* dance and sing in every locality, throughout the seasons of Vasanta\* and Sharad\*.

A demon called Shankhachuda came one day, when Balaramji and Shri Krishna were dancing and singing with the Gopis. He caught hold of the Gopis, and ran off with them. The terrified Gopis cried out in panic. Balaramji and Shri Krishna chased Shankhachuda, and rescued the Gopis, but the demon ran for his life. Balaramji stayed back to protect the Gopis, but Shri Krishna continued the chase. Ultimately, He killed the demon, plucked out the precious gem from his forehead, and gave it to Balaramji.

The episode of the Yugal Geet\* follows the killing of Shankhachuda. It is the fourth of the five love songs of the Gopis. Apart from the first and last two verses, the other twenty-five shlokas are called the ‘Yugal Geet’. What does it contain? It is a conversation between the Gopis, and the subject is Shri Krishna. When Shri Krishna goes to the forest to graze the cattle, the Gopis go with Him in spirit, and discuss His Leelas. See a sample of their conversation –

वामबाहुकृतवामकपोलो वल्गितभ्रुरधरार्पितवेणुम् ।  
 कोमलाङ्गलिभिराश्रितमार्ग गोप्य ईरयति यत्र मुकुन्दः ।।  
 व्योमयानवनिताः सह सिद्धैर्विस्मितास्तदुपधार्य सलज्जाः ।  
 काममार्गणसमर्पितचित्ताः कश्मलं ययुरपस्मृतनीव्यः ।। १०.३५.२-३

*Vaamabaahukritavaamakapolo valgitabhruradharaarpitave`num,*  
*Komalaangulibhiraashritamaargam gopya eerayati yatra mukundah.*  
*Vyomayaanavanitaah saha siddhairvismिताastadupadhaarya salajjaah,*  
*Kaamamaarganasamarpitachittaah kashmalam yayurapasmritaneevyah.*  
 10. 35. 2 – 3.

The Gopis speak among themselves, saying, “Oh, my friend, our beloved Shyamsundar always bestows love on all who love Him; He even grants liberation to those who hate Him! When He puts His flute to His lips, and

His fingers run over the holes of the flute, the lilting tune is such that – leave alone all others – even the wives of the spiritually evolved come on their air planes, with their husbands, and lose consciousness.”

This is the kind of talk with which the Gopis beguile their time. Their minds are always focused upon Shri Krishna. They become filled with His essence. An ambience of joy and exhilaration used to prevail all over Vraja, due to the Leela and songs of Shri Krishna.

It was on one such day that the demon Arishtasura\* came, in the form of a Vrishabha. Vrishabha is called ‘Dharma’. The purpose of Dharma is to fulfill human desires. It is called ‘Kamadhuk’\* - one can obtain whatever one wants from it. However, when demonic tendencies enter Dharma, it is prepared to kill the Lord, and His devotees. This Vrishabha did exactly that. So, the Lord pushed him back, and in the end, killed him.

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj said, “Parikshit, the Leela of the Lord is strange. You are aware of the deep devotion of Naradji, and of how he goes around, helping people to see the Lord. After Arishtasura was killed, Naradji had a sudden impulse to visit Kansa. He told Kansa, “Look here, Kansa, the little baby girl who escaped from your hands and flew into the sky, was the daughter born to Nanda-Yashoda. Vasudev-Devki’s sons are Balaram and Krishna, and they have killed your demons.”

Kansa was furious when he heard this. He drew out his sword to kill Vasudev-Devki, but Naradji advised him to deal with the matter with greater tact.

Having said this, Naradji took his leave and departed. Kansa put Vasudev and Devki into prison again. He called Keshi\* and other demons, and told them to kill Balaram-Krishna. Keshi went obediently to Vraja, with the intention of killing Shri Krishna.

Keshi used to neigh like Hayagreeva\*, and his neighs terrified the people of Vraja. However, who can bully Shri Krishna? He thrust His hand into Keshi’s mouth. Keshi was suffocated to death.

Naradji came to Shri Krishna, when Keshi was killed. He eulogized the Lord in seclusion, and said, “Lord, it is a matter of great joy that You playfully killed the demon Keshi, who wore the form of a horse. He was so frightening, that the Devtas would abandon Heaven, and run to hide, when they heard his neighing. Now, the day after tomorrow, I will see the wrestlers Chanur\* and Mushtik, and the elephant Kuvalayapeeda, and even Kansa, killed at Your hands” –

चाणूरं मुष्टिकं चैवं मल्लानन्यांश्च हस्तिनम्।

कंसं च निहतं द्रक्ष्ये परश्चोऽहनि ते विभो॥ १०.३७.१६.

*Chaanooram mushtikam chaiva mallaananyaanshcha hastinam,  
Kansam cha nihatam drakshye` parashvohani te` vibho.  
10. 37. 16.*

Naradji also named the other demons who would be killed by Shri Krishna. Not only that, he spoke of all Shri Krishna would do – years later – at Dwarka\*. Then he took his leave, and departed.

No one should be surprised at Naradji's predictions, since he is 'trikaaladarshi'\*. He has the knowledge of the past, present and future.

After Naradji left, Shri Krishna returned to His routine of looking after the cattle, along with His friends. He continued to spread the supreme bliss to the Vrajavasis, by His various antics. One day, He was playing Hide and Seek, when Vyomasura\* came in the form of a gwaal baal. He was skilled in the art of creating illusions. In the course of the game, he would kidnap the cowherd boys and hide them in a cave. When Shri Krishna saw that His playmates were reducing in number, He understood what Vyomasura was up to. He pounced on the demon, and throttled him to death. Then He released the imprisoned gwaal baals from the cave.

When Kansa heard that both Keshi and Vyomasura had been killed, he prepared a scheme to invite Balaram and Shri Krishna to Mathura. The excuse he made was to organize a 'Dhanush Yagya'\*. He met Akruraji\* with a great display of affection, catching Akruraji's hands warmly, and said, "You have been a great friend of mine. Go to Vraja, and bring my enemies Balaram-Krishna, to Mathura. I want to have them killed by the elephant Kuvalayapeeda. Chanur and Mushtik will kill them, in case they escape from the elephant. This earth will then be free of all obstacles, whatsoever, and you and I shall be able to rule with impunity."

Akruraji replied, "Your scheme is excellent, but who knows what lies ahead. However, I will do as you say."

How could the Lord Shri Krishna have come to Mathura, had Kansa sent someone cruel to bring Him? Krura\* means one who is violent, and Akrura is the person who does not even have a hint of violence. It is only compassion which brings the Lord. He is pleased with a pure heart and straightforwardness. The Lord is never pleased with a crooked mind.

When Akrura got onto his chariot, and set off for Vraja, the thought came to him, "Oh, today I will actually see the Lord Rama-Krishna! I will jump down from the chariot as soon as I catch sight of them, and will roll at their feet. Then the Lord will place His lotus-like hand on my head, and welcome me."

Lost in such thoughts, Akrura forgot which road he should take. He started from Mathura in the morning, but reached in the evening, even though his was a fast chariot. What can be done, if the one who drives loses his way?

Akrura saw Balaram-Krishna as soon as he reached Vraja. Both brothers were seated at the place where the cows were milked. As soon as he caught sight of them, Akrura jumped down as planned, and began to roll at their feet. His eyes were full of tears, his body shivered, and his heart overflowed with love. He experienced deep joy.

The Lord Shri Krishna lifted Akrura up, and embraced him. Balaramji also embraced him, and then both brothers took him by the hand and lead him to their house.

When they reached home, Nandababa welcome Akrura warmly. After the polite, preliminary enquiries were over, a cow was brought, and made to stand before Akrura. This is a gesture of welcome, indicating that all the milk, curd, and ghee of the cow is for the use of the guest. Offering a cow is an essential part of welcoming a guest. After this, they massaged Akrura's legs, to reduce his fatigue, and he was served a tasty meal.

निवेद्य गां चातिथये संवाह्य श्रान्तमादृतः ।

अन्नं बहुगुणं मेध्यं श्रद्धयोपाहरद् विभुः ॥ १०.३८.३९.

*Nive`dya gaam chaatithaye` samvaahya shraantamaadritah,*

*Annam bahugunam me`dhyam shraddhayopaaharad vibhuh.*

10. 38. 39.

Thus, when all the formalities of welcome and proper service were completed, and all the others had wandered off, then Rama-Krishna came to Akrura. Akrura explained everything to them. At first, Rama-Krishna started laughing, but then they said, "Uncle, don't let anyone know about all this. Just tell everyone that a Dhanush Yagya, and wrestling matches are being held at Mathura. Kansa has invited all of you to come and see it." Akrura accepted their suggestion. Nandababa had it announced to the whole village that they were to leave for Mathura the next morning, taking milk, curds and ghee with them.

When the Gopis heard that Rama-Krishna were to go to Mathura, they were filled with anguish. They had never before been separated from the two brothers. They began to blame the Vidhata\*, "God, You are merciless. First You allow us to meet, but then You separate us before our hopes and aspirations have been fulfilled. This play of Yours is like a child's game."

अहो विधातस्तव न क्वचिद् दया

संयोज्य मैत्र्या प्रणयेन देहिनः ।  
तांश्चाकृतार्थान् वियुनङ्क्ष्यपार्थकं  
विक्रीडितं तेऽर्भकचेष्टितं यथा ॥ १०.३९.१९.  
*Aho vidhaatastava na kvachid dayaa*  
*Samyojya maitryaa pranaye`na de`hinah,*  
*Taanshchakritaarthaan viyunankshyapaarthakam*  
*Vikreeditam te`rbhakache`shtitam yathaa.*  
10. 39. 19.

The Gopis further said, “Oh, God, we know that Akrura is not to be blamed for the turn of events – it is Your cruelty. It is You, who have come in the form of Akrura, and are snatching away the eyes which You gave to us. You should not do this.”

क्रूरस्त्वमक्रूरसमाख्यया स्म नश्चक्षुर्हि दत्तं हरसे बताज्ञवत् ।  
येनैकदेशेऽखिलसर्गसौष्ठवं त्वदीयमद्राक्ष्म व्यं मधुद्विषः ॥ १०.३९.२१.  
*Kroorastvamakroorasamaakhyayaa sma nashchakshurhi dattam harase`*  
*bataagyavat,*  
*Ye`naikade`she`khillasargasaushthavam tvadeeyamadraaksham vayam*  
*madhudvishah.*  
10. 39. 21.

Lamenting in this manner, the Gopis became deeply agitated by just the prospect of being separated from Shri Krishna. They began to weep, calling out, “Oh, Govind! Oh, Damodar! Oh, Madhav!” They wept all through the night.

The following morning, Akrura completed his routine ablutions, and harnessed the horses. Balaram-Krishna left Yashoda Maiya, and other Gopis – all weeping profusely – as though setting off to watch some spectacle. Nandababa and his retinue got into their carts, laden with milk, curds, ghee, etc. However how could the carts keep up with a chariot? The chariot sped towards the Yamuna, while the carts moved in the direction of Mathura.

During the journey, it occurred to Akrura that he may be doing something very sinful by conveying these two boys to the killer Kansa. The Lord sensed Akrura’s feelings. So, when Akruraji stationed the chariot on the river bank, and went to bathe in the Yamuna, the Lord granted him a vision. Akrura saw the Narayana form of the Lord, sleeping on the serpent, inside the waters of the Yamuna. Eulogizing the Lord, Akrura said, “Lord, I am deluded with Your Maya, how do I recognize You? All the Shastras are for



worshipping You. You have undertaken several Avatars. The entire Creation is an illusion which exists within You.”

When Akrura emerged from the Yamuna, Shri Krishna asked him, “Uncle, why do you look so astonished? Did you see anything extraordinary?” Akrura said, “Sir – having seen You, what other sight can seem extraordinary?”

When Rama-Krishna reached Mathura, after completing their baths, etc., they saw that Nandababa and his retinue had already reached, and set up the camp. Once there, Shri Krishna told Akrura, “Uncle, now you must go to Mathura.” Akrura said, “Please, both of you, come to my home with me.” Shri Krishna, however, replied, “No, Uncle. We will come to your house only after we have finished our work.”

Akrura departed unwillingly. He informed Kansa that Balaram-Krishna had arrived in Mathura, and then went to his own house.

In the third pahar\* of the following day, Shri Krishna entered the city, with Balaramji and a few gwaal baals. He saw the prosperity and beauty of Mathura – you may read the description in the Shrimad Bhagwat. Mathura was famous as a model city.

When Balaram-Krishna entered Mathura, the first person they met was Kansa’s dhobi\*. He was no ordinary washerman – he had hundreds of assistants, and carried the washed and unwashed clothes separately, on huge pack animals.

Seeing the dhobi, Shri Krishna asked, “Give us the garments you have, which are likely to fit us.” The man was blinded by self-importance. So far from offering the clothes, he began to berate the Lord. Shri Krishna did not really need the garments – His purpose was to create terror in Mathura. So, when the dhobi began to talk roughly, He gave the man such a slap that his head was severed from his body. The city was in an uproar, with people saying that the youngsters of Vraja are very bold and impudent. “When they behave thus with the dhobi, who knows how they’ll behave with others?”

Balaram-Krishna and the gwaal baals proceeded on their way, and entered – uninvited – the home of a gardener called Sudama. Sudama welcomed them with great warmth. Shri Krishna was pleased with him, and gave Sudama the boon that Laxmi would increase in his house.

Now – see what the outcome of Shri Krishna’s behavior so far, was. Kansa’s servants all came to fear him, but those involved in farming and gardening developed a partiality for Him.

When they continued their walk, they met Kubja\*. Shri Krishna called out, “Hey, you beauty!”

The Bhakti Shastra\* calls this the Anugraha\* of the Lord. Where is the godliness of God, if He doesn't show Grace to the jeeva? If He were to be attained only by the pure-hearted seekers, what could the impure, fallen sinners do, to reach Him? Of what use would the Lord's name, 'Karunavarunalaya'\* be, if there was no compassion in the Lord's heart, for such people?

That is why Shri Krishna called out, "You beauty", to Kubja, and then went up to her. He would not have gone to her, had He been the nirguna Brahman. Because, to achieve an experience of the nirguna Brahma, it is the jeeva who has to develop the four qualities called Sadhan Chatustaya of spiritual importance, and then shatter the veil of nescience, through his own efforts.

Kubja was 'trivakra'\* – meaning, physically crooked in three places. Some people give a spiritual interpretation, saying that she was the Kundalini Shakti\*, but I refer to her as a historical figure. She was on her way to Kansa, carrying sandal paste and scented oils for his massage. She had not even looked at Shri Krishna. However, she was completely enchanted when He called out, addressing her as "You beauty!"

Shri Krishna said, "Beautiful lady, give us the sandal paste and scented oils you have. It will benefit you."

Kubja said, "Great Sir, where will I find anyone better suited for these items, than the two of you? Please take as much as you want."

Both brothers, Rama-Krishna, accepted the ointments. Shri Krishna was pleased. He pressed both her feet with His own, held her chin, and jerked her up. Her body stood straight and tall. As it is, she had a lovely face. When her body lost its ugly humps, she became beautiful in every aspect.

Seeing this – or hearing about it – the women in Mathura began to say, "Why do we need to go to a beauty parlor? We will all adore this boy! Because, he can turn even the ugly, into the beautiful, in a flash." At least half of Mathura's population would have been female, and all the ladies became favorable towards Shri Krishna.

After this, the Kripamurti\* Shri Krishna reached the site of the Dhanush Yagya, accompanied by Balaramji. Shri Krishna broke the Dhanush of worship, and – when the guards came to attack – left for their camp. Back at the camp, He had a good meal of kheer\*, and went peacefully to sleep.

But Kansa, when he heard all this, could get no sleep. Whether awake or sleeping, he would see inauspicious signs everywhere. He was mortally afraid of the impending death.

Even so, Kansa did not give up his wicked plans. He had the arena prepared the next morning, and had the elephant Kuvalayapeeda – whose strength

shook the earth – stationed at the entrance. He also ordered Chanur and Mushtik to remain alert.

Balaram-Krishna had prior knowledge of Kansa's wicked plans. They walked confidently towards the arena, and killed Kuvalayapeeda. They tore off his tusks, placing one each on their shoulders, and reached the arena with the elephant's blood spattered on their bodies.

Inside the arena, each person present saw Balaram and Shri Krishna according to their feelings towards them – जाकी रही भावना जैसी, प्रभु मूर्ति देखी तिन तैसी '*jaakee rahee bhaavanaa jaisee, prabhu moorati de`khee tina taisi*'. The ladies saw them as Kama, Kansa and his group saw them as Death, and those learned in scriptures saw them as the Virat form of Shri Krishna. Ordinary people felt as though the nine Rasas had manifested as humans.

The wrestling match commenced, in which Chanur, Mushtik, and the other wrestlers were all killed. The people of Mathura were fascinated by Shri Krishna's courage, and sided emotionally with Him.

But Kansa, seated on his throne on a high platform along with his warriors, was furious. He began to babble angrily, "Catch these two boys! Kill them!" Just then, Shri Krishna jumped nimbly onto the platform. Kansa stood up, unsheathing his sword. Shri Krishna, however, needed no weapons. He had never used any weapon in Vraja, to kill the demons. He had sucked the life out of Putana, throttled the hurricane, and torn Bakasura apart with His bare hands. He had, thus, never needed a weapon. He caught the plait of Kansa's hair, and gave him such a shove that Kansa fell off the platform. Shri Krishna also jumped down, and sat astride his chest. Kansa was so frightened that he died of heart failure. Shri Krishna did not even box, slap or kick him. The very fear was enough to accelerate his heartbeats enough to cause his death.

After this, Shri Krishna advised everybody to carry out Kansa's last rites. He then went to Devki-Vasudev, and got them released from prison. Devki-Vasudev remembered the four-armed vision of the new-born Shri Krishna. They thought, "Oh – this is the four-armed Lord," and refrained from embracing Him.

Shri Krishna said, "Father, Mother, I am guilty of neglecting to serve you. The son, who, despite being able, does not serve his parents, can never receive good fortune. The wicked Kansa harassed you a great deal, but My constraints rendered Me incapable of helping you."

Vasudev-Devki's hearts were filled with emotion, when they heard these words. They made Balaram-Krishna sit on their laps, and their tears sprinkled the heads of the brothers. Their throats were choked with emotion, and they were unable to say anything.

After meeting His parents, Shri Krishna went to release Ugrasena from prison. He reinstated Ugrasena on the throne, and said, "Henceforth, you are our King. We are your servants. No one can cause you harm, any more. We stand behind you, to obey your every command."

The people of Mathura were so delighted when Shri Krishna reinstated Ugrasena as King, that the old felt young again. Nobody felt unwell, or unhappy, or lacking in anything. The grandeur and appeal of Mathura was enhanced. Prosperity spread all over. Actually, where the Lord – who is Laxmipati\* - is present, how can there be any dearth of beauty or wealth?

Then, Shri Krishna went with Balaramji, to Nandababa's camp. He embraced Nandababa, and spoke privately to him. He said, 'Baba, it is you, who is My true Father, because it is you who have brought Me up. I now request you to return to Vraja. I know that My absence will cause you much suffering, but it is essential to bring happiness to our people in Mathura. After this is done, I will come to meet you.'

Hearing these words, Nandababa felt as though he had been struck by a thunderbolt. He was quite unable to speak. He swallowed his tears silently. He readied his carts, and returned to Vraja with the Gopas.

Yashoda Maiya understood everything, when she saw that Balaram-Krishna had not returned with the others. "Why didn't your spirit leave your body, when you left our sons at Mathura?" she asked Nandababa.

Nandababa said, "Dear, you speak the truth. I should have died there. But, just think! How terrible our Lala would have felt, had I died there! Now, we will slowly die of sorrow, till we see him again. We will live, while dying, and die while we live; but we will not let Lala know anything, which will cause him pain. What sort of a lover is he, who refuses to bear pain, but inflicts it on the one he loves?"

When Vasudev-Devki regained normalcy, they organized the Yagyopaveet Sanskar of Balaram-Krishna. They also donated ten thousand cows, as per the pledge they had taken, when Shri Krishna was born.

Apart from this, Vasudevji sent Balaram-Krishna to Sandeepani Muni's Ashram in Ujjain, for education and initiation. The brothers lead a disciplined life and studied hard. Within a short period of time, they had learnt all the different sciences. When the time came, for them to return to their homes, they went to their Teacher, asking respectfully, "What Guru Dakshinaa\* can we give?" The Guru had come to know of the exceptional prowess and fame of the brothers. After discussing the matter with his wife, he said, "Our son had drowned in the sea, in the Prabhaas region. Please bring him back to us."

As per his command, Balaram-Krishna brought the son back from Yamaloka. The son stood before his parents. Balaram-Krishna again asked the Guru if he wanted anything else.

Guruji said, “My sons, what greater Guru Dakshina can there be, than this? Which desire of a Guru – who has students like you, Purushottam\* - can remain unfulfilled? Now, go to Your home. May Your fame be such as to purify all who hear about You. May You never forget anything You have learnt.”

Rama-Krishna returned to Mathura, after receiving the instructions and blessings of their Guru. The people felt supremely joyful to see them again, after a long period.

Now comes Uddhav’s visit to Vraja. Shri Shukadevji Maharaj introduces Uddhavji with these words –

वृष्णीनां प्रवरो मन्त्री कृष्णस्य दयितः सखा ।

शिष्यो बृहस्पते साक्षादुद्धवो बुद्धिसत्तमः ॥ १०.४६.१.

*Vrishneenaam pravaro mantree krishnasya dayitah sakhaa,*

*Shishyo vrihaspate`saakshaaduddhavo buddhisattamah.*

10. 46. 1.

“Parikshit, Uddhavji was the best of the Vrishni lineage. He was the direct student of Vrihaspati, and was highly intelligent. What could reveal more about his greatness, than the fact that he was a close associate and adviser of Shri Krishna?”

In the Harivansha Purana, it is written that Vasudevji had a brother called Devbhag\*. Uddhavji was his son, so he was also a cousin of Shri Krishna. According to the Mahabharata, Uddhavji’s name in the lineage records, was Vrihadbal.

Grammatically, the meaning of the word ‘Uddhav’ is – उत्कृष्टो धवो यस्य ‘*utkrishto dhavo yasya*’. The one whose Lord is the best, is the form used on special occasions, is the best for worship, and is a mobile form of divinity – is called ‘Uddhav’.

One day, when they were alone, Shri Krishna told Uddhavji to go to Vraja. “My parents, the Gopa-Gopis, and gwaal baals, are all full of sorrow at being parted from Me,” He explained. “Go and remove their sorrow.”

Uddhavji was delighted to be granted an opportunity to render some service. He went to Vraja, and saw that the place seemed to be filled with happiness. Every home had the worship of Devtas and ancestors. The ritual fire worship also prevailed in every home, and all appeared to be well and happy. The cows and calves were fine, and the Gopis were singing. Then – who was

troubled by Shri Krishna's absence? The fact was that every heart held the hope of Shri Krishna's return. "Who knows when He will suddenly arrive? He will be filled with sorrow, if He sees that the cows aren't healthy, or that the houses haven't been cleaned, or the Gopis are not dressed up." So, everyone pretended to be happy, so that Shri Krishna would be happy. However, every heart burnt with the fire of viraha\*.

Nandababa was very happy to meet Uddhavji. He felt as though Shri Krishna had come home. He fed Uddhavji affectionately, and made him rest, and asked how Shri Krishna was, describing His Leelas. Yashoda Maiya also sat near them, but did not say a word. Tears of love rolled down her cheeks, and milk flowed from her breasts, as she looked back at each Leela of Shri Krishna.

यशोदा वर्ण्यमानानि पुत्रस्य चरितानि च ।

शृण्वन्त्यश्रूण्यवास्त्रक्षीत् स्नेहस्नुतपयोधरा ॥ १०.४६.२८.

*Yashodaa varnyamaanaani putrasya charitaani cha,*

*Shrunvantiyashroonyavaasraaksheet sne`hasnutapayodharaa.*

10. 46. 28.

Uddhavji was enchanted to see the love of Nanda-Yashoda for Shri Krishna. He said, "Nanda-Yashoda Maiya, you are both blessed, to have such filial love for Shri Krishna – who is Lord Narayan, Himself! But, do not grieve. If you reflect, you will see that Shri Krishna is with you. For Him, nobody is either dear, or non-dear. He has equal goodwill for all."

दृष्टं श्रुतं भूतभवद्भविष्यत् स्थास्नुश्चरिष्णुर्महदल्पकं च ।

विनाच्युताद् वस्तु तरां न वाच्यं स एव सर्व परमार्थभूतः ॥ १०.४६.४३.

*Drishtam*

*shrutam*

*bhootabhavadbhavishyat*

*sthaasnushcharishnurmahadalpakam cha,*

*Vinaachyutaad vastu taraam na vaachyam sa e`va sarvam paramaarthabhootah.*

10. 46. 43.

Uddhavji said, "Nandababa and Yashoda, whatever is seen and heard; whatever has happened, is happening, and will happen; all that is inanimate and animate, big and small, is not separate from Shri Krishna. Everything is Shri Krishna Himself. Shri Krishna is the Atma of every Atma."

Uddhavji spoke in this way, all night long. Next morning, he met the Gopis, who taunted him liberally. Then, when they met him in solitude, one of them became so engrossed in the Lord, that she believed a passing bee to be Shri

Krishna's envoy. She began to speak to it. This came to be called the Bhramar Geet\*. Nandadas, Surdas, and other poets have elaborated upon it at length. The description in the Bhagwat is in the Maaline meter, and is very beautiful –

मधुप कितवबन्धो मा स्पृशांग्रि सपत्न्याः

कुचविलुलितमालाकुङ्कुमश्मश्रुभिर्नः ।

वहतु मधुपतिस्तन्मानिनीनां प्रसादं

यदुसदसि विडम्ब्यं यस्य दूतस्त्वमीदृक् ॥ १०.४७.१२.

*Madhupa kitavabandho maa sprishaanghri sapatnyaah*

*Kuchavilulitamaalaakunkumashmashrubhirnah,*

*Vahatu madhupatistanmaanineenaam prasaadam*

*Yadusadasi vidambyam yasya dootastvameedrik.*

10. 47. 12.

The Gopis said, “Oh, you friend of the Deceiver! Don't frolic before me! Don't try to cajole me, or make excuses. You have no love, yourself, for anyone – you just flit here and there –

सकृदधसुधां स्वां मोहिनीं पाययित्वा

सुमनस इव सद्यस्तत्यजेऽस्मान् भवादृक् ।

परिचरति कथं तत्पादपद्मं तु पद्मा

ह्यपि बत हतचेता उत्तमश्लोकजल्पैः ॥ १०.४७.१३.

*Sakridadharasudhaam svaam mohineem paayayitvaa*

*Sumanasa iva sadyastatyaje `smaan bhavaadrik,*

*Paricharati katham tatpaadapadmam tu padmaa*

*Hyapi vata hritache `taa uttamashlokajalpaih.*

10. 47. 13.

Oh, Bee – He has the same habit as you have, of drinking the nectar of a flower, and then going off elsewhere. He did, indeed, give us the taste of His nectar, just once. Oh, dear! How simple Laxmi is, to serve His feet with such devotion! She must be carried away by His sweet smooth-talk.

यदनुचरितलीलाकर्णपीयूषविप्रुट्

सकृददनविधूतद्वन्द्वधर्मा विनष्टाः ।

सपदि गृहकुटुम्बं दीनमुत्सृज्य दीना

बहव इव विहङ्गा भिक्षुचर्यां चरन्ति ॥ १०.४७.१८.

*Yadanucharitaleelaakarnapeeyushaviprut-*

*Sakridadanavidhoota dvandvadharmaa vinashtaah,  
Sapadi grihakutumbam deenamutsrija deenaa  
Bahava iva vihangaa bhikshucharyaam charanti.  
10. 47. 18.*

Oh, Bee, people abandon their homes, when they listen to talks about Him. Their parents continue to weep disconsolately, and so do their wives. But those who leave everything for Him, turn into beggars, and live as the birds and animals, under the shelter of trees.”

The Bramar Geet has ten such Shlokas. The verses contain Prem\*, Pranay\*, Sneh\*, Mana\*, Anurag\*, Bhava\*, Mahabhava\*, Adhiroodha\*, Maadan\*, and Modan\*. Shree Roopa Goswami has analyzed ten signs of behavior, like sanjalpa\*, vijalpa\*, and chitrajalpa\*, in these ten shlokas. In chitrajalpa, the Gopis speak erratically about their beloved.

Uddhavji was entranced to see the depth of the Gopis’ feelings. He began to say, “Gopis, you are blessed, and blessed is the love you feel. In this world, people try to develop Bhakti for the Lord, by giving alms, undertaking vrat, tapa, and other efforts for spiritual progress. This Bhakti is not given easily even to the Rishi-Munis. You, however, have not only procured the supreme Prem-Bhakti\*, you have also established the ideal of devotion.”

दानव्रततपोहोम - जपस्वाध्यायसंयमैः ।  
श्रेयोमिर्विविधैश्चान्यैः कृष्णे भक्तिर्हि साध्यते ॥  
भगवत्युत्तमश्लोके भवतीभिरनुत्तमा ।  
भक्तिः प्रवर्तिता दिष्ट्या मुनीनामपि दुर्लभा ॥ १०.४७.२४-२५.

*Daanavratatapohoma – japasvaadhyayasanyamaih,  
Shre`yobhirvividhashchaanyaih krishne` bhaktirhi saadhyate`.  
Bhagavatyuttamashloke` bhavatateebhiranultamaa,  
Bhaktih pravartitaa dishtyaa muneenaamapi durlabhaa.  
10. 47. 24-25.*

Uddhavji then gave the Gopis the message sent by Shri Krishna. The Gopis were delighted to receive this. Uddhavji stayed in Vraja for many days, listening to talk about Shri Krishna. He saw each and every place where Shri Krishna had done some Leela. Ultimately, he was so overcome by his emotions that these words rose up –

आसामहो चरणरेणुजुषामहं स्यां  
वृन्दावने किमपि गुल्मलतौवधीनाम् ।  
या दुस्त्यजं स्वजनमार्यपथं च हित्वा



भेजुर्मुकुन्दपदवीं श्रुतिभिर्विमृग्याम् ।। १०.४७.६१.

*Aasaamahō charanare`nujushaamaham syaam  
Vrindaavane`kimapi gulmalatauvadheenaam,  
Yaa dustyajam svajanamaaryapatham cha hitvaa  
Bhe`jurmukundapadaveem shrutibhirvimrigyaam.  
10. 47. 61.*

“The best thing for me would be to turn into some shrub, vine, or plant – here, in Vrindavan – so that the dust of the feet of the Gopis may continue to fall on me.”

It was extremely hard for the Gopis to leave their relatives, and the principals of propriety. They were far from being headstrong or selfish. Nor did they lack love for their families. Indeed, they had a deep affection for their families. They lived pure and decent lives. Despite this, they gave up social norms – not easy to give up – because of their love for Shri Krishna. So much so, that they ceased to care about even worldly ethics, other-worldly merit, their own bodies, and their self- interest, and comfort. Blessed indeed are the Gopis.

What a great achievement it was, that the Gopis could serve the foot-prints of the Lord – who is sought even by the Shrutis. How great was their good fortune!

You see, the Shrutis ascertain the desirability of an object through the predominance of the Atma. We do not love someone in order to bring fulfillment to them; we love for the sake of fulfilling our own Atma.

Here, however, the Gopis love their bodies, because the bodies belong to Shri Krishna. The love of the Gopis is such that it contains no whiff of vanity. Their condition is such that they are unaware of the external world. They have become one with Shri Krishna. Their love has been assimilated – not made into a topic for mere discussions. They do not even feel that they love. They place the vessel of curds on their heads, and go around calling out, “Buy Gopal! Take Gopal!” They have become absolute affection, personified –

ग्वालिनी प्रगट्यो पूरन नेहु ।

दधिभाजन सिरपर लिए कहति गुपालहि लेहु ।।

*Gvaalinee pragatayo poorana ne`hu,  
Dadhibhaajana sirapara liye`kahati gupaalhi le`hu.*

Ultimately, when Uddhavji started on his journey back to Mathura, Nandababa and the other Gopas gave many gifts for him, to take back. They told him -

कर्मभिर्भ्राम्यमाणानां यत्र क्वापीश्वरेच्छाया।

मङ्गलाचरितैर्दानै रतिर्नः कृष्ण ईश्वरे ॥ १०.४७.६७.

*Karmabhirbhramyamaanaanaam yatra kvaapeeshvare`cchayaa,*

*Mangalaacharitairdaanai ratirnah krishna eeshvare`.*

10.47. 67.

“Uddhavji, we do not know who is the Ishwara of others, or what He is like – saguna, nirguna, nirakar or sakar. Let those who know, know it. Our Ishwara is Shri Krishna, so we desire only that our minds be filled with Him.”

Back at Mathura, Uddhavji distributed all the gifts sent by the Vrajavaasis, but did not dare to place any before Shri Krishna. Of what value are material objects, in comparison to the love of the Vrajavaasis? Why speak of the men and women of Vraja – even the trees were turned towards the path to Mathura, in the hope that they would see Shri Krishna return. Even the vines would ooze honey in the hope that Shri Krishna would come and partake it. The eyes of the cows were focused on the road to Mathura, waiting for Him to come and pat them, and look after them.

“Sir, You are extremely hard!” Uddhavji told Shri Krishna. “I have been to Vraja, and seen for myself, and felt in the depth of my heart, how deep their love for You is. And still, You left them and came here?”

Shri Krishna showed Uddhavji, “See, just as the Gopis meditate upon Me, and think constantly of Me, in the same way, My whole body is filled with the Gopis – रोम रोम प्रति गोपिका ‘roma roma prati gopikaa’.”

A few days later, the Lord Shri Krishna took Uddhavji with Him, and went to Kubja’s home. She accorded Him a very warm welcome. The Lord granted her what she desired, and returned home with Uddhavji.

Some time later, The Lord went to Akruraji’s house, accompanied by Balaramji and Uddhavji. Akruraji came foreword to welcome them. He folded his hands respectfully to both brothers, and then they bowed down to him. Akruraji asked Rama and Krishna to sit on the best seats. He did the ritual worship and eulogized them. “You coming to my house has made it a blessed place,” he said.

The Lord Shri Krishna said, “Uncle, please go to Hastinapur once, and stay there for a few days. I want you to bring back the news of our well-wishers,

the Pandavas. When I get their news from you, I will make suitable arrangements for their comfort and wellbeing.”

As commissioned by the Lord, Akruraji went to Hastinapur. He stayed there for a number of days, and found out what the situation was, of both the Kauravas and the Pandavas. He came to know of the many injustices inflicted by the Kauravas upon the Pandavas. Kunti, the mother of the Pandavas, began to cry, when Akruraji visited her. “Akruraji, I am so unhappy, to be surrounded by enemies,” she said. “My condition is like a doe trapped between a herd of wolves. My sons are fatherless. Will it ever happen that our Shri Krishna will come here, and give solace to my orphaned children?”

Saying this, Kunti felt as though Shri Krishna stood before her. She began to talk to Him, “Oh, Shri Krishna! You are the personification of the Sacchidananda\*. You are the Mahayoga\*. You are the Vishwatma\*. You are the one who gives life to all. Oh, Govind! I face sorrows, one after another. I have surrendered to You. Protect me! Save my children!”

कृष्ण कृष्ण महायोगिन् विश्वात्मन् विश्वभावन ।

प्रपन्नां पाहि गोविन्द शिशुभिश्चवाससीदतीम् ।। १०.४९.११.

*Krishna krishna mahaayogin vishvaatman vishvabhaavan,*

*Prapannaam paahi govinda shishubhishchaavaseedateem.*

*10. 49. 11.*

Akruraji tried to console Kunti, saying, “Please do not worry. Your sons are born to destroy all that is irreligious. I will give all your news to Shri Krishna.”

Just before departing for Mathura, Akruraji went to meet Dhritarashtra. “Sir,” he said, “Please enhance the fame and glory of the Kuru Vansha\*. You have become the King, due to the fact that your brother, Pandu, departed for Heaven. So, please be equal in your behavior to your sons and the Pandavas. Only then will you achieve a good name in this world, and obtain sadgati\*. If your behavior is diametrical to that which is righteous, you will be criticized by all, and have to go to hell, when you die. This world is as transient as four moonlight nights. It is a game, played in a dream. So, control your mind’s tendencies and save yourself from being partisan.”

King Dhritarashtra replied, “Akruraji, all you say is only for my good. However, your advice does not linger in my fickle mind for even one minute. I have heard that the All-powerful God has descended, to relieve the burden of the Earth. So, whatever He wishes, will happen.”

Akruraji understood Dhritarashtra's indication. He took a fond farewell of the Kauravas and the Pandavas, and returned to Mathura. He gave Shri Krishna and Balaramji all the news in detail.

Shri Shukadevji then began to describe the killing of Jarasandh, and the establishing of the city of Dwarka. "Parikshit," he said, "Kansa had two wives – one was called Asti and the other was called Prapti\*."

अस्तिः प्राप्तिश्च कंसस्य महिष्यौ भरतर्षभ। १०.५०.१.

*Astih praaptishcha kansasya mahishau bharatarshabha. 10. 50. 1*

Now see, what is the spiritual interpretation of Asti-Prapti? 'Asti' means 'we have this much', and 'prapti' means 'we will get this much more'. The Gita's description is, इदमस्तीदमपि ते भविष्यति पुनर्धनम् 'idamasteedamapi te' bhavishyati punardhanam'.

Asti and Prapti were both Jarasandh's daughters. Jarasandh was made of two parts, joined to make one body. Since a demoness called 'Jara' had joined the two parts, he was given the name of Jarasandh. This is Dehadhyas. It is written in the Bhagwat, that Jarasandh is karmabandhan\*. Vanity gets entangled with 'asti' and 'prapti', when a person gets attached to his work.

So, Asti-Prapti both went to their father, Jarasandh, and told him how their husband had died. Jarasandh was furious when he heard the details. He attacked Mathura with an army of twenty three Akshauhinis. He attacked seventeen times, but each time he was defeated by Shri Krishna-Balaram. And why not – where Balaramji's Yoga and Shri Krishna's Gnan prevails, what could Jarasandh's strength achieve?

Jarasandh, however, was not alone. Kalyavan\* came to Jarasandh's aid, when he was defeated. Kalyavan had been granted a boon that his enemy would have to flee before him. Shri Krishna knew this. So, He appointed Balaramji to defend Mathura, and came to face Kalyavan, and then began to flee. Kalyavan chased Him. They reached a place where Muchkund lay, fast asleep. Shri Krishna covered the sleeping Muchkund with His dupatta, and hid. Kalyavan mistook Muchkund for Shri Krishna, and gave him a kick. Muchkund woke up, and Kalyavan was turned into ashes, as soon as Muchkund's gaze fell on him. Shri Krishna appeared before Muchkund, who recognized Him, and began to eulogize Him. Shri Krishna gave Muchkund the boon that in his next birth, he would become a Bhakta. Then, He returned to Mathura.

Kalyavan's army had surrounded Mathura, and Jarasandh was preparing to launch his eighteenth attack. So, Shri Krishna created the city of Dwarka, in the sea, after consulting Balaramji. He shifted His people there overnight.

Then the two brothers destroyed Kalyavan's army, and took away all his wealth.

Just then, Jarasandh attacked Mathura for the eighteenth time. His twenty three Akshauhini army was like a sea at high tide. He looted the wealth which had been taken from Kalyavan's army. Impure wealth becomes a cause of unhappiness, so Shri Krishna let Jarasandh snatch away the wealth. Shri Krishna-Balaram could have defeated Jarasandh for the eighteenth time, but they decided that it was better to avoid more killing. They ran away, barefooted. Since that day, Shri Krishna was given the name of Ranchod\*. During their escape, they took their meals at the Ashramas of Mahatmas, did Satsang, and ultimately reached Girinar mountain. Hot on the chase, Jarasandh also reached there. When both brothers reached the pinnacle of the Girinar, Jarasandh set fire to the mountain from all sides. Shri Krishna-Balaram, however, jumped off the mountain, and reached Dwarka.

You see, my brother, whether it is Shri Krishna or Shri Rama, they also have to face favorable and unfavorable situations, when they take on a human form. The one who passes through with patient endurance, is a Mahapurush. Shri Krishna smiled through every situation. Circumstances did not affect Him.

Balaramji's marriage was organized first, after things were settled at Dwarka. As per the dictates of the scriptures, the marriage of the elder brother should take place first. The bride was Revti\*, the daughter of King Raivat of Aanarta.

It is said that King Raivat went, with his daughter Revti, to Brahmaji, and said, "I will get my daughter married to the most superior man in your Creation."

Brahmaji laughed, saying, "In the one minute which has passed here, several eons have passed on your world. Now, your kingdom is gone, and so is your lineage. You should go to Dwarka and get your daughter Revti married to Balaramji."

Regarding this episode, preachers say that Revti – being a girl from the Satya Yuga, was very all. Balaramji was from the Dvapara Yuga, so he was much shorter than Revti. It became a problem that how can a tall girl marry a short man? Balaramji said, "It is not a difficult problem. I will set things right." He picked up his plough, and placed it on Revti's shoulder, and pulled till she was shortened to his height. This tale, however, is only to make people laugh. It is nowhere written in the Shrimad Bhagwat.

After Balaramji got married to Revti, it was Shri Krishna's turn to get married. The first marriage was with Rukmini, the daughter of King Bhishmak of Kundinpur. 'Bhishmak' means 'a terrifying ocean'. Rukmini

was also the golden Laxmi, which is why she came as Bhishmak's daughter. Venom was the first to emerge from the ocean.

Rukmi did not want his sister Rukmini to marry Shri Krishna, but Rukmini wanted none other than Krishna. She had heard high praises of Shri Krishna's greatness; of His beauty and sweetness, and she was enchanted by all she had heard.

When Rukmi finalized Rukmini's marriage with Shishupal, she sent a trustworthy Brahmin to Shri Krishna with a message. As soon as the Brahmin entered, Shri Krishna got up from His seat, and made the Brahmin sit on it. He welcomed the Brahmin with the appropriate rituals of washing his hands and feet. Then, He asked, "Brahman Devta, you have undertaken a long journey to come here, so you must be having some service in mind, which I can render. I know very well that you would not have come for material wealth, because Brahmins are always and invariably contented. So, please tell me the reason for your visit."

The Brahman Devta said, "Maharaj, Rukmini has sent You a proposal of marriage, and has said –

श्रुत्वा गुणान् भुवसुन्दर शृण्वतां ते  
निर्विश्य कर्णविवरैर्हरतोऽङ्गतापम्।

रूपं दृशां दृशिमतामखिलार्थलाभं

त्वय्यच्युताविशति चित्तमपत्रपं मे॥ १०.५२.३७.

*Shrutvaa gunaan bhuvanasundara shrinvataam te`*

*Nirvishya karnavivarairharatongataapam,*

*Roopam drishaam drishimataamakhilaaarthalaabham*

*Tvayyachyutaavishati chittamapatrapam me`.*

10. 52. 37.

‘Oh, Bhuvanabhushana\* Shyamsundar, I have heard from people about Your qualities, Your good looks, beauty, sweetness, character, and nature. When a person hears about Your qualities, the qualities enter the heart through the passage of the ears, and then all the physical discomforts are quietened. I know that to anyone, who has eyes, the very sight of Your form bestows Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. These are the four principal purusharthas for humans. A glimpse of You is Svaartha\* and Paramartha\*, and everything else. That is why my mind enters shamelessly into You. If I can not marry You in this birth, I will be reborn a hundred times, but I will definitely marry You, because I have presented my soul to You.

Now, You must ensure that the jackal does not succeed in taking the lion's portion. So, please come before the marriage ceremony takes place. Come at

the time when I go to the temple of the Devi - as per the custom of my lineage – and kidnap me from there.”

Hearing all this, Shri Krishna said, “Brahman Devta, I am also in love with Rukmini. So much so, that I can’t sleep at night. I know that Rukmi does not want Rukmini to marry Me, because he hates Me. However, you will see that I will soon scatter the enemies and get Rukmini out of their clutches.”

तथाहमपि तच्चित्तो निद्रां च न लभे निशि।

वेदाहं रुक्मिणा द्वेषान्ममोद्वाहो निवारितः॥

तामानयिष्य उन्मथ्य राजन्यापसदान् मृधे।

मत्परामनवद्याङ्गीमेधसोऽग्निशिखमिव॥ १०.५३.२-३.

*Tathaahamapi tacchitto nidraam cha na labhe`nishi,*

*Ve`daaham rukminyaa dve`shaanmamodvaaho nivaaritah.*

*Taamaanyishya unmathya raajanyaapasadaan mrighe`,*

*Matparaamanavadyaangeeme`dhasoagni – shikhaamiva.*

10. 53. 2-3.

Shri Krishna did not consult anyone – neither His parents, nor Balaramji. He got onto the chariot, and went off towards Kundinpur with only the Brahmin! It did not take them long to reach. Nobody could discover whether Shri Krishna was there at the invitation of the Groom, or the Bride. Shishupal was the son of Shri Krishna’s aunty, so many felt that He was with the Bridegroom’s party. When Bhiskmak heard of Shri Krishna’s arrival, he gave Him a warm welcome, and arranged for accommodation appropriate for Him. The citizens flocked to catch a glimpse of Shri Krishna. They began to say that it is He, who is suited to be Rukmini’s husband. She should be married to Shri Krishna.

When Balaramji heard that Shri Krishna had set off alone for Kundinpur, he followed Him with his army. Even though he knew that nobody could harm Shri Krishna, he was aware that many wicked people were gathered there, who were capable of doing anything. “It is necessary for me to go there,” thought Balaramji. When we love someone, it is natural to feel anxious about their safety.

When the kings accompanying Shishupal heard of Shri Krishna’s arrival, they became alert and watchful. They lined up, ready and fully armed, seated on their horses and elephants and chariots, lining both sides of the road by which Rukmini was to pass, to worship the Devi. Rukmini came on schedule, with her armed Guard. After washing her hands and feet, she worshipped the Devi, assisted by the ladies of the family. “Mother,” prayed

Rukmini, “Please let me be married to Shri Krishna.” She had been informed of Shri Krishna’s arrival by the Brahmin.

When Rukmini completed her worship and emerged from the temple, the Kings appointed to guard her swooned at the sight of her radiant beauty. They fell off their elephants and horses and chariots, and their weapons slipped from their hands.

Just then Rukmini caught sight of Shri Krishna. She wanted to climb up on His chariot. Shri Krishna leaned forward and caught her hand. He lifted her onto the chariot, and went off, with Balaramji and the Yaduvanshis following. It was just like a lion taking his portion from in-between a pack of jackals, and going off.

When the Kings regained their senses, they gathered their forces. Balaramji’s army attacked, and drove them back. However, Rukmini’s brother Rukmi, declared that he would avenge the kidnapping of his sister. “If I cannot bring my sister back, I will never enter this city again,” he vowed.

Having taken this vow, Rukmi reached Shri Krishna with his army. However, what could he do alone, when all the Kings accompanying him with their vast armies, were defeated and retreating? Shri Krishna fought for a while with Rukmi, then captured and disfigured him. He tied Rukmi up and put him on His chariot. Rukmini was distressed to see her brother in this condition. Just then, Balaramji reached them, after having defeated and scattered the enemy armies. He comforted Rukmini, set Rukmi free, and allowed him to return. True to his word, Rukmi did not go to Kundinpur. He established a city called Bhojkat, and began to live there.

When Shri Krishna reached Dwarka with Rukmini, He invited all their relatives and friends. Brahmins were invited and asked to conduct the proper ritual of marriage for Shri Krishna and Rukmini.

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj narrated to Parikshit, that after the Lord Rudra\* had burnt Kama to ashes, Kama’s wife, Rati, had prayed to him. Lord Rudra granted Rati a boon that her husband would be born as the son of the Lord Vasudev.

It was the same Kamadev, who was born as the son of Shri Krishna and Rukmini, and was given the name of Pradyumna. Pradyumna was not even ten days old, when he was kidnapped by a demon called Shambarasura\*, from the delivery room. The demon threw the baby into the sea, and returned to his own home. He had come to know that Pradyumna would be his enemy in future.

A huge fish swallowed Pradyumna. The fish was caught by a fisherman, and presented to Shambarasura. When the cook cut the fish open, he found the



beautiful baby still alive. A lady servant of Shambarasura, called Mayavati, took the baby and began to bring him up.

Mayavati was not other than Kama's wife, Rati. She had changed her name and form, to work in Shambasura's house, awaiting the rebirth of her husband. Naradji had informed her that her husband had been born as the baby Pradyumna.

So, Rati – in the name of Mayavati – loved Pradyumna deeply. Soon Pradyumna became a young man. He was so handsome that women were infatuated as soon as they saw him. Even Mayavati – actually Rati – changed in her attitude towards him.

Pradyumna understood her hints. "You are like my Mother," he told her. "How is it that your feelings have changed?"

Rati disclosed the whole story about herself, and his past. "My Lord," she said, "Your Mother is extremely distressed since you got lost. It is very important that you reach Dwarka. However, we can not escape while this extremely strong demon, Shambar, lives. So, please destroy him."

Mayavati Rati taught Pradyumna a technique called 'Maha Maya', which Pradyumna employed to kill Shambarasura.

The Rati took her husband, and flew to Dwarka. Both of them appeared extremely beautiful there. The people were fascinated by the beauty of this couple. Apart from Shri Krishna, nobody could recognize them. Shri Krishna did not think that it was proper for Him to reveal their background. Ultimately Naradji arrived, and told everybody who Pradyumna and Rati really were. People's happiness knew no bounds. Pradyumna began to live at Dwarka with his wife, Rati.

After getting married to Rukmini, Shri Krishna got married to Jambavati\* and Satyabhama\*. These two marriages are connected in the episode of the Syamantak Mani\*. The Shrimad Bhagwat contains the description of these marriages, but before narrating that, I want to tell you about a little play, called "Lalita-Madhav", by Shri Roop Goswami.

According to this play, when Shri Krishna left Vraja and went to Dwarka, the Gopis fainted with the sorrow of separation. Vrishabhanu\* took his unconscious daughter, Radha\*, to heaven. When she could not regain consciousness even there, she took on the form of Satyabhama, and forgot the past. Then Satrajit\* - who worshipped the Sun – took her as his daughter, and got her married to Shri Krishna.

In the same way, Radha's friend, Lalita, was unable to bear the pangs of separation. She jumped from a mountain top, to end her life. Jambavan\*, who stood below, saved her and adopted her. He called her Jamabavati, and got her married to Shri Krishna.

These are all different stories, and playwrights have the right to narrate them. Now, listen to the version of the Shrimad Bhagwat.

Satrajit, who lived in Dwarka, was a great devotee of the Sun, so the Sun presented him with a Mani. The Mani gave eight units (754 kilos) of gold every day. Shri Krishna told Satrajit, “Such a valuable item should be kept guarded as a National treasure. You should give it to King Ugrasen.” Satrajit refused to take His advice, and gave the Mani to his brother, Prasen.

One day, Prasen rode out hunting, wearing the Mani. Both Prasen and his horse were killed by a lion. Then Jambavan killed the lion and took the Mani.

Thus, the Mani changed several hands. However, back at Dwarka, Shri Krishna’s reputation was marred by a rumor that He had stolen the Mani. It is seen, here, how innocent people are blamed unfairly. When even Shri Krishna faced slander, how can anyone hope to escape it?

The Lord Shri Krishna began to take steps to clear His name. He searched till He reached Jambavan’s cave. A number of highly respected citizens were with Him. Shri Krishna told them to wait outside, and entered the cave alone.

Inside the cave, there was a confrontation between Jambavan and Shri Krishna. They wrestled fiercely for twenty eight days. Ultimately Jambavan recognized that this was the Lord Incarnate, and gave – not only the Mani – but also his daughter, Jambavati, to Shri Krishna.

The people who had accompanied Shri Krishna, waited outside the cave for twelve days, and then returned dejected to Dwarka. The people of Dwarka were filled with anxiety for Shri Krishna. They began to curse Satrajit, and went to pray at the temple of the Devi Durga, for Shri Krishna’s safe return. The Devi blessed them, and, at the same moment, Shri Krishna appeared there, with the Mani and the newly wed Jambavati. Dwarka was filled with joy.

Shri Krishna summoned Satrajit, and gave him the Mani. Satrajit felt terribly ashamed. After thinking about the incident for some days, he got his daughter, Satyabhama, married to Shri Krishna, and presented the Mani to Him as well. Shri Krishna returned the Mani, saying, “Keep the Mani with you, but you may present the gold it produces, to Me.”

After this, Shri Krishna and Balaramji went to Hastinapur. While they were away, Shatadhanva\* killed Satrajit and stole the Mani. Satyabhama was deeply distressed at the murder of her Father. She went to Hastinapur to inform Shri Krishna and Balaramji. They returned to Dwarka. Shatadhanva was frightened. He kept the Mani with Akrurji, and ran away with all possible speed. Shri Krishna and Balaram gave the chase. Shri Krishna

killed him just before they reached Mithila\*, but the Mani was not found on Shatadhanva's body. Shri Krishna told Balaramji, but he was not, in his heart of hearts, able to believe Shri Krishna. He went off to meet the King of Mithila.

Shri Krishna returned to Dwarka. He called Akrurji – who had also tried to run away in fear along with Kritavarma\* - and said, “Uncle, I know that Shatadhanva has left the Mani with you. Although this is the rightful inheritance of My sons, you may keep it with you. There is, however, a problem, that My elder brother, Balaramji, does not believe Me, in the matter of the Mani –

किन्तु मामग्रजः सम्यक् न प्रत्येत मणिं प्रति।

*Kintu maamagrajah samyak na pratye`ta manim prati.*

So, please show everybody this Mani, just once, to dispel all doubts.” Akrurji took the Mani out from inside his clothes. It shone as brightly as the Sun. Akrurji gave the Mani to Shri Krishna. Shri Krishna held it up, for all present to see, and vindicated Himself. He then returned the gem to Akrurji. Shri Krishna's marriages to Kalindi\*, Mitravinda\*, Satya\*, Bhadra\*, and Laxmana\* are described after this. Shortage of time does not permit detailed descriptions, but you can read them in the Shrimad Bhagwat.

After the description of these marriages, comes the description of the rescue of the sixteen thousand maidens, who had been imprisoned by Bhaumasura. This materialistic demon was extremely cruel. He said that he would marry the girls when they totaled one hundred thousand. His arrangements for the security of his Capital, Pragjyotishpur, were excellent. It was extremely difficult to enter Bhaumasura's fortress. Shri Krishna, however, used His Chakra to kill all the Sentries, and killed Bhaumasura, and liberated the sixteen thousand maidens he had imprisoned.

What was to be done with the liberated maidens? In today's world, one cannot imagine the difficulties they faced. In those days, they would not have received shelter, and nor could they have got married. They would never be socially accepted.

So, the Karunavarunalaya\* Lord Shri Krishna – in keeping with His progressive ideas – took the revolutionary step of marrying them all. He brought them to Dwarka, as His Queens, and His lineage continued through them.

Thus, by His action, Shri Krishna showed the society of that time, that helpless women should not be demeaned and discarded. They are absolutely

innocent and free of guilt. Some people question as to how Shri Krishna could have so many wives, but there is nothing, really, to be surprised at.

You see, the Lord is a Chandra Vanshi. In the lunar calendar, there is the Amavasya\*, and there is the Purnima\*, and there are fourteen tithes, from the Pratipada\* to the Chaturdashi\*. Thus, the Moon has sixteen Kalas\*. Like the Chandrama, Shri Krishna also has sixteen Kalas, and each Kala has thousands of divisions. It is the same with the tendencies of the mind. The fact is that Shri Krishna is the Lord of all the tendencies, of all the objects in the world, and the entire Creation. Considering this, if Shri Krishna is made the Lord of sixteen thousand wives, no one should be surprised.

You must also realize that on the one hand, there were thousands of wives, and on the other hand, they each had countless modes of allurements. Despite all their allurements, however, they did not succeed in captivating Shri Krishna's heart. Nor could they cause any kind of attraction in His mind. That is because Shri Krishna is Atmaram\*. He was completely free of all desire, when He frolicked with them. That is the reason why Shri Shukadevji said, later –

स्मायावलोकलवर्दशितभवहारि

भूमण्डलप्रहितसौरतमन्त्रशौण्डैः ।

पत्न्यस्तु षोडशसहस्रमनङ्गबाणै-

र्यस्येन्द्रियं विमथितुं करणैर्नशेकुः ॥ १०.६१.४.

*Smaayaavalokalavadarshitabhavahaari*

*Bhroomandalaprahitasauratamantrashaundaih,*

*Patnyastu shodashasahasramanangabaanai*

*Ryasye`ndriyam vimathitum karanairnashe`kuh.*

10. 61.4.

One day, Rukmini showed a little pride. You will be amazed to hear the things Shri Krishna said to her that day. He said, “You see, Rukmini, I had abducted you to make My enemies lose face. That purpose is achieved. I do not have anything at all. I am nirguna, and nirdhan\*. You made a great mistake by marrying Me. You may now go where you please, and marry whoever you wish.”

Hearing such words, Rukmini fell in a faint. She began to fall, but Shri Krishna reverted to His four-armed form, and lifted her up. He consoled her, comforted her, and asked, “You got upset at such a little joke? Oh, there is always much joking and teasing between couples, so you should enjoy this, instead of becoming sad.”

The Mahatmas explain this story by saying that Rukmini could not even imagine being separated from Shri Krishna. So, Shri Krishna spoke in a way which would give her the experience of verbal separation.

Then comes the description of Shri Krishna's progeny. I will not go into it in detail. I just want to tell you that Rukmini's son, Pradyumna's second marriage was arranged with the daughter of his uncle, Rukmi. Although Rukmi had not forgotten his humiliation, he allowed his daughter to marry Pradyumna, to please his sister, Rukmini.

Pradyumna had a son called Aniruddha. Aniruddha's second marriage was arranged with Rukmi's Granddaughter. During the wedding celebrations, Balaramji killed Rukmi in the course of a game of dice. It must be remembered here, how Balaramji had rebuked Shri Krishna angrily, when He had defeated, disfigured and bound Rukmi up, when He had abducted Rukmini. At that time, Balaramji had sided with Rukmi. Now, however, he was so angry to see Rukmi cheat at dice and laugh at him, that he killed Rukmi on even such a felicitous occasion. This proves how gambling becomes the cause of much evil and unhappiness. It also shows how circumstances can turn tragic due to a game of chance.

Rukmini was very angry with Balaramji for killing her brother. Shri Krishna's home was filled with domestic strife. What was He to say? Balaramji would be upset, if He sided with Rukmini, and Rukmini would be upset if He sided with Balaramji. He remained silent. Remaining silent can put an end to a dispute, instead of fanning it.

One day, Naradji came to Dwarka, and told Shri Krishna, "Maharaj, You have so many sons of different ages – does anyone keep track of them?"

Shri Krishna asked him, "What is the matter, Sir? Has anyone misbehaved with you?"

Naradji replied, "No, Sir, nobody has misbehaved. However, are You aware of the whereabouts of Your Grandson, for the past four months?"

Shri Krishna asked, "Where is he? Truly, I have not seen him recently."

Whereupon, Naradji told Shri Krishna the whole story, of how Usha, the daughter of Vanasura\* had seen Aniruddha in her dream, and how her friend Chitrlekha\* had painted his picture for her, and kidnapped him, and taken him to Usha. Naradji also told Him that Aniruddha was with Usha, and was held captive by Vanasura.

The news flashed all over Dwarka like lightning. The anger of the Yaduvanshis knew no bounds. They attacked Vanasura, under the leadership of Shri Krishna and Balaramji.

Vanasura was a great devotee of the Lord Shankar. The Lord Shankar had, one day, been very pleased with his deep devotion, and had offered him a boon.

Vanasura replied, “Maharaj, my thousand arms have become a load on me. I can find no one to fight with. So, please have a battle with me.”

The Lord Shankar said, “You fool! You have developed a great vanity! Take this flag, and hoist it on your palace. The day it falls, you will know that the one, who will fight with you, has arrived.”

The flag fell off when the Yaduvanshis attacked Vanasura. Vanasura fought a terrible battle. Shankarji fought at his side, as well. However, the Lord Shri Krishna, Balaramji, and their army defeated them both. In the end Shri Krishna chopped off Vanasura’s arms, leaving just four, at the behest of Shankarji.

Vanasura allowed Aniruddha to go free. He got his daughter Usha, married to Aniruddha, and gave many gifts and a huge dowry, when they left. Usha-Aniruddha lived in conjugal bliss at Dwarka. Shri Krishna and Balaramji also returned to Dwarka with their army.

Tomorrow, I will tell you what happened next.

Om Shantih Shantih Shantih

## Pravarchan XII

### (Chapter X)

How can one know for sure, which is the speech of God? The qualification is that what God says, is always for the benefit of all His children – whether the children have Satva Guna, Rajo Guna, or Tamo Guna! Just as a Father wants the best qualities in his son to surface, God, too, wants goodwill, awareness and joy to arise in everybody. So, when the words have the effect of giving rise to feelings of Sacchidananda\* in the jeevas who are susceptible to these three tendencies, and the words are beneficial for all, then it is called the speech of the Lord. Any speech containing even a hint of partiality for any group, caste, religious sect; and any indication that only the believers of their sect will attain heaven, and everyone else will go to hell – then you can take it that they are not the words of God. Because, God desires the good of all His creatures, all his children.

It is the speech of God, which has emerged in the form of the Shrimad Bhagwat, through the words of Narayana, Shiva, Shesha, Brahma, Narad, Vyas, Shukadev, and Sanakadi. The words apply not only to humans, but also to animals and birds, vines and shrubs, etc. It applies to all. So much so, that it is to the benefit of each and every creature which exists.

The Yaduvanshi Princes were playing in the fields one day, when they saw a chameleon which had fallen into a well. All their efforts to rescue it failed. It was only when Shri Krishna came and touched it, that it turned into a Devta. After obtaining the form of a Devta, he explained that in his past life, he had been born in the Ikshavaku lineage, as King Nriga. “I donated an incalculable number of cows,” he said. “So many, that if all the particles of dust, and all the stars in the sky, and all the raindrops which fall on earth could be counted, they would total to the number of cows donated by me.”

यावत्यः सिकता भूमेर्यावत्यो दिवि तारकाः ।

यावत्यो वर्षधारश्च तावतीरददां स्म गाः ॥ १०.६४.१२.

*Yaavatyah sikataa bhoome`ryaavatyo divi taaraakaah,*

*Yaavatyo varshadhaaraashcha taavateeradadaam sma gaah.*

10. 64. 12

Then he told them the cause of his becoming a chameleon. “Two Brahmins had a dispute with regard to a cow donated by me. They both claimed that I had donated the same cow to both. So, I was confused by the claim of the

two Brahmins. I wanted to buy the cow back from one of them, but neither agreed. They departed dissatisfied.

I died at the end of my natural span of life. Yamaraj asked me which I preferred to accept first – the fruit of my sin, or the fruit of my meritorious deeds. I told him that I preferred to bear the fruit of my sin first. So, I had to become the chameleon.”

The Valmiki Ramayana’s version is that when the two Brahmins began to argue about the ownership of the cow, and went to King Nriga for justice, the King delayed in replying. He would nod in agreement, to both Brahmins, as each staked his claim. The King died before giving justice, which is why he had to become a chameleon.

This story proves two points. One is that according to our scriptures, an item can not be donated more than once. It is irreligious to use the same item twice, as a donation, and a human being has to suffer the consequences of his actions, if he does that. The second point is that a King should never delay in giving justice.

Having attained a divine form, Nriga said, “Lord, by Your Grace, I am released from the birth I got as a result of my sin. Please grant me permission to go to the Devlok. Please bless me, that no matter where I go, my mind dwells constantly upon Your feet.”

Having eulogized and bowed to the Lord, King Nriga left for Heaven. Shri Krishna told His family members who were present, “You must never snatch away the wealth of a Brahmin. You must bow down to them as respectfully as I do. I will never pardon anyone who flouts this command of mine, or insults them”,

यथाहं प्रणमे विप्राननुकालं समाहितः ।

तथा नमत यूयं च योऽन्यथा मे स दण्डभाक् ॥ १०.६४.४२.

*Yathaaham praname` vipraananukaalam samaahitah,*

*Tathaa namata yuyam cha yonyathaa me`sa dandabhaak.*

10. 64. 42.

After this episode comes Balaramji’s visit to Vraja. He stayed there for two months, giving solace and comfort to Nandababa, Yashoda Maiya, and all the people of Vraja, as they were suffering with the burning agony of being separated from Shri Krishna.

On one occasion, Balaramji called out to Yamunaji, but she pretended not to hear. He was angry, and prepared to break her up into little pieces, with his plough. Ultimately, when Yamunaji remembered Balaramji’s tremendous



power, she asked him to forgive her. He forgave her, and then frolicked with the Gopis, in her limpid waters.

Balaramji was still at Vraja, when Paundrak – a fast friend of the King of Kashi\* – sent a message to Shri Krishna, claiming to be the original Vasudev. He had attached two artificial arms to his shoulders, and pretended to be four armed. Deceit, falsehood and pretense can never prevail with the Lord Shri Krishna. So, the Lord killed Paundrak, along with his friend, and they were uplifted.

Sudakshin, the son of the King of Kashi, asked the Brahmins there to undertake an evil ritual to destroy Shri Krishna, and avenge the death of his father. The Lord's Sudarshan Chakra destroyed the priests involved in the ritual. Then the malevolent effects of the ritual turned onto Sudakshin, turning him and the Brahmins to ashes.

How Balaramji – famous for his amazing feats – killed the troublesome monkey, Dvivid, is described next. The Adhyatmik meaning of 'dvivid' is dvi = two, vid = knowledge. A person having two kinds of knowledge, who stands neither on one side of the river bank, nor on the other, an undecided person, one who is fickle and filled with doubts, like a monkey. It is also called 'duvidhaa', meaning indecision or uncertainty. This tendency is harmful for everybody. So, Balaramji exerted himself to destroy it.

Now the story comes to the incident when Samba, the son of Jambavati, was captured while returning to Dwarka. He had gone to Hastinapur, and was eloping with Laxmana, the daughter of Duryodhan. The angry Kauravas caught and imprisoned him. When this was communicated by Naradji, to the Yaduvanshis, they prepared to attack the Kauravas. Balaramji did not want a war between the Yaduvanshis and the Kauravas, so he went to Hastinapur to calm the Yaduvanshis. He told the Kauravas, "You have unjustly imprisoned Samba. However, we do not wish to declare war on you. So, you must release him and send him to Dwarka with his newly wed wife."

Balaramji was under the impression that Duryodhan – who had learnt the techniques of mace fighting from him – would heed his words. Duryodhan, however, was too puffed up with his own power and wealth. He was infuriated by Balaramji's words, and began to speak abusively.

Balaramji said, 'All right. If you don't want to listen to me, be prepared to be destroyed.' I will rid the earth of the Kauravas." Saying this, he raised his plough, and using the tip, began to submerge the city of Hastinapur into the Ganga. The ground rocked violently, and people cried out in terror. This frightened the Kauravas, and they surrendered at Balaramji's feet, eulogizing him. Balaramji calmed down and told them not to be afraid.

Duryodhan then got his beloved daughter, Laxmana, married to Samba. He gave them many gifts and much dowry, and saw them go off with Balaramji. Back at Dwarka, Balaramji told everybody what had transpired. The people were all very happy at this turn of events.

Naradji then came to Dwarka, and there is a description of how he saw the Lord Shri Krishna's religious activities. When you people read this, you will see how the Lord Shri Krishna did His duty as a husband, to every wife He had. You will see how respectfully He behaved with the Saints who came to meet Him, and how detached He was, even while occupied with all His activities.

When Naradji saw all this, he eulogized the Yogeshwara\*, and departed, singing of the Lord's Leelas, which purify all three worlds. According to Shri Shukadevji Maharaj, whoever listens to, or speaks of these Leelas of the Lord Shri Krishna, obtains a supreme love and devotion of the Lord.

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj then described to Parikshit, the Lord Shri Krishna's daily schedule. He spoke of the day when the Sudharma Sabha was being conducted at Dwarka. A man came, on behalf of the Kings who were held captive by Jarasandh. "Lord," said the man, "All the Kings seek Your protection. They pray to you to deliver them from their troubles."

Just then, Naradji came to the meeting, and said, "Maharaj Yudhishtira desires to hold a Yagya to worship You, and obtain temporal power and fame."

Two appeals were thus placed simultaneously before Shri Krishna. People began to discuss which should be given priority. Should Jarasandh be attacked first, or should they participate first in Yudhishtira's Yagya?

The episode is described briefly in the Shrimad Bhagwat, but the Mahabharata describes it at length. According to the Mahabharata, people were divided in their opinion. Balaramji, supported by Kritavarma and some others, became the leader of one group, while Uddhavji, supported by Satyaki and some others, became the leader of the other group. They began to argue vehemently.

Balaramji's group was of the opinion that Yudhishtira's Yagya was of no importance to them. They should focus on conquering Jarasandh.

Uddhavji's group, however, felt that it would be more diplomatic to strengthen their forces first. Jarasandh was so powerful that he could not be easily conquered. "If the Pandava's strength is added to ours," they argued, "defeating Jarasandh will be an easy matter. Yudhishtira's Yagya makes it imperative that other Kings are all subjugated, and that includes Jarasandh. So, even if our priority is to conquer Jarasandh, we should first participate in Yudhishtira's Yagya."

In the end, Shri Krishna accepted the advice of Uddhavji, and told everybody that they should go to Indraprastha. The messenger of the imprisoned Kings departed satisfied.

Yudhishtira and his brothers were very happy when Shri Krishna and Balaramji reached Indraprastha with their army. A warm welcome was accorded to them.

Before the Yagya, Yudhishtira gave the order for the Digvijay\*. All the Kings, except Jarasandh were vanquished. How was the Digvijay to be fulfilled? Yudhishtira was oppressed with this problem.

Shri Krishna said, “Please do not worry. Uddhavji has told Me how we can defeat Jarasandh. It is Jarasandh’s custom that after he completes his daily worship, and before he has his lunch, he fulfills the wishes of his guests. I will go, along with Bhima and Arjuna, at that time.”

Accordingly, Shri Krishna, Bhima and Arjuna dressed themselves like Brahmins, and went to Jarasandh’s palace. As per the Mahabharata, they scaled the walls of the fort, but the Shrimad Bhagwat makes no mention of the route they took.

Seeing these three arrive at the time of receiving guests, Jarasandh asked, “What do you want?” Even though he had guessed their identity from their appearance, he followed the dictates of hospitality, and asked what they desired.

Shri Krishna said, “Sir, we are not Brahmins. We desire no food. We are warriors, and desire the hospitality of fighting with you.” Saying this, Shri Krishna introduced Himself, Bhimasen and Arjuna.

Jarasandh was unperturbed. “All right,” he said. “You will get what you have come for. However, Krishna, you have fled from me, so what kind of a fight can you put up? This Arjuna is younger than me, so I will not fight with him. This Bhimasen is certainly my equal. So, I am prepared to fight with him.”

Jarasandh gave Bhima a mace. They fought for twenty seven days. Ultimately, when Bhimasen began to lose hope, Shri Krishna tore apart a twig, indicating to Bhimasen to tear Jarasandh apart. Bhimasen did so, and Jarasandh was torn into two pieces.

It has been mentioned earlier, that Jarasandh is ‘Dehadhyas’. Jara had joined him, to make him one, otherwise he was originally in two parts. Just as there is a knot tying ‘Jada’\* to the ‘Chetan\*’, in the same way, he had been joined by Jara. It was a knot between the Atma and the Anatma\*. So, he could not be killed by only physical strength – Knowledge was needed for him to be destroyed. The work of Agnan is nullified by Gnan. It was this knowledge which Shri Krishna imparted to Bhimasen, telling him to tear his enemy

apart, and separate the two pieces. Then, the inanimate is obviously separate from the spirit.

Now, when Jarasandh was killed, Shri Krishna crowned his son, Sahdev, as King. He then went to the imprisoned Kings and had them released. The Kings eulogized the Lord fervently. Their hair had grown straggled and they wore prisoners' clothes. The Lord arranged for their haircuts, baths, and new garments. He arranged for them to be given chariots and much wealth, and sent them off to their own Kingdoms. All the Kings became devoted to Shri Krishna, and participated in Yudhishtira's Yagya.

Shri Krishna then returned to Indraprastha with Bhimasen and Arjuna. Everyone was glad that the Digvijay had been completed. Yudhishtira was too overwhelmed to say anything.

The Yagya commenced. Shri Krishna was worshipped as the most superior person present. Although this did not harm Shishupal in any way, even then he stood up and began to talk abusively.

Shri Krishna tolerated one hundred abuses from Shishupal, because He had promised this to Shishupal's mother. When Shishupal's abuses exceeded one hundred, He cut off Shishupal's head with His Chakra. Before everybody's eyes, a bright glow of light emerged from Shishupal's body and merged into Shri Krishna's body.

Everyone was amazed to see this, and began to question how it was, that the spirit of a person so full of hatred, and who had abused the Lord repeatedly, was allowed to merge into the spirit of Shri Krishna. The fact is that the Lord does not look at the intention; He sees only whether the person remembers Him, or not.

After Shishupal's death, the last ritualistic bath of the Yagya was completed peacefully. You may read the beautiful description in the Shrimad Bhagwat. In the same episode, it is mentioned that at Shri Krishna's bidding, the Mayadanav\* had created a great conference Hall for Yudhishtira. This Hall was so unique that the floor seemed to be a pool of water, and the pools of water looked like solid flooring. Duryodhan was confused, and stepped into a pool, mistaking it for the flooring. Seeing him fall, Draupadi burst into peals of laughter, and Bhimasen joined her. Shri Krishna encouraged them tacitly.

Yudhishtira disapproved of such mockery and rebuked them, but the damage could not be undone. One is amazed at the extent of hatred which results from an insignificant incident. Something which is considered unreal, illusionary or petty, can give rise to factors which end in killing elders and even the entire lineage. The Mahabharata war is an example of this. Even the

memory of that great war is hair raising. The foundation of that war was laid that day.

The Lord Shri Krishna and Balaramji were still at Indraprastha with the Pandavas, when Shishupal's friend, Shalva, attacked Dwarka. He had undertaken severe asceticism and attained tremendous powers. By Lord Shankar's blessing, the demon Muy had created a huge air plane for him. This air plane was like a palace, and it contained a fully equipped army. Pradyumna, the son of Rukmini, faced Shalva's attack. Shalva, however, was a great illusionist, and his blows rendered Pradyumna unconscious.

Just then, Shri Krishna reached Dwarka with Balaramji. After a battle which lasted twenty seven days, Shri Krishna shattered Shalva's air plane and killed him. After Shalva's death, his friends Dantavakra and Vidoorath came to fight, but the Lord killed them too.

The story goes on to say that Balaramji favored neither the Kauravas, nor the Pandavas. He desired the welfare of both, and was steadfast in remaining neutral. When he saw the preparations for the imminent war, he made the excuse of going on a pilgrimage, to absent himself. He visited the holy places on the banks of the Yamuna and Ganga, and reached a region called Naimisharanya. He saw Romaharshanji, who was born in the low caste of Suta, seated higher than the Brahmins. It angered Balaramji that Romaharshanji neither rose to welcome him, nor did he bow down in respect. Balaramji attacked him with the tip of the sharp Kusha grass, and Sutaji was killed by this attack.

The Rishi-Munis present rose up in horror. Even though they were aware of what Balaramji's true form was, they told him to undertake some penance for his action. Balaramji accepted this suggestion, in order to set an example to people. He placed Raomaharshani Ugrashravaa, the son of Romaharshan, on his father's seat, did the necessary rituals, and asked him to give discourses. He also blessed Raomaharshini Ugrashravaa with a long life. After this, Balaramji killed the demon Balval at the behest of the Rishis, and went to visit other places of pilgrimage.

The significance of this incident is that Balaramji made a major change in the area of discourses, by establishing the tradition of the discourse of the Bhagwat. It was his wish that the tradition of the Shesha should also endure, just like the traditions of the Shrutis and Shukadevji, who comes from Narayana. As per his wish, Ugrashravaa became the preacher of the Bhagwat.

Parikshit expressed a desire to Shri Shukadevji, that he thirsted to hear more of Shri Krishna's Leelas. Shri Shukadevji then narrated the story of Sudama.

The Shrimad Bhagwat describes Sudama as a Brahmagnani, virakta\*, shantachitta\* and jitendriya\* Brahmin. The Tamil Bhagwat of South India, however, calls him 'Kuchail'. A person whose clothes are dirty is called kuchail. Poverty results in dirty clothes, so the name Kuchail is appropriate. But what is the basis of the name Sudama? The basis is that this episode is given in two chapters in the Shrimad Bhagwat, and 'Shreedamaacharit'\* is written at the end of the first chapter. This establishes that his name was Shreedamaa, which later became Sudama. That apart, Shri Krishna had a friend of the same name, at Vraja, who was the brother of Radharani. This Shridama – or Sudama – however, lived near Dwarka and was a friend of Shri Krishna's school days.

So, Sudama had the qualities of a Brahmin and a Sage. The Lord had established these qualities in him. He was filled with learning and wisdom, and was the embodiment of the emotional and ritual worship of the Lord. He was also completely free of all worldly desires. It was his custom to never ask for anything from anybody. He would eat whatever anyone gave him, and go hungry if nobody brought him anything. Due to a constant state of hunger, he had become so thin that his veins showed prominently. He never had anything decent to wear – he was always in rags. His wife's condition was the same. Whenever anyone gave a little rice, she would cook it and serve it to him, at times going hungry herself. This was how they lived.

A time came when they got no food for several days. Driven by helplessness, Sudama's wife appealed to him, "Lord, I have heard that your friend is Shripati – the husband of Laxmi, the Goddess of wealth – the Lord Narayana Himself, and that He lives close by, at Dwarka. So, if you were to go and meet Him, His Grace will surely bring us our daily food, at least."

Sudama, however, was disinclined to go to the Lord for the sake of any material gain. He was convinced that the Lord is omniscient, all-powerful and supremely compassionate. "My condition is not hidden from Him," thought Sudama. "He must be feeling that this is the proper condition for me, so we should be pleased with what pleases Him. We have no need to make any effort."

Along with these thoughts, it occurred to Sudama, "I don't have to ask for, or take anything, but if I go to Dwarka, I will have the good fortune of seeing the Lord. What bigger gain can there be?"

Sudama told his wife, "All right. Since you wish me to do so, I will go. However, get something for me to present to Shri Krishna. It is not proper to go empty handed."

Sudama's wife was happy to hear this, but from where was she to get something for Sudama to take as a present? She went to four houses, and

brought back, from each, a fistful of pounded rice flakes. They were an assortment of reddish and white, small and big flakes. Four fistfuls of four kinds of pounded rice! However, there was no option. She tied them in a tattered piece of cloth and gave the bundle to Sudama.

Sudama went to Dwarka. He was amazed to see the grandeur and luxury of the city. Shri Krishna's home never had any restrictions for Saints and Brahmins, so Sudama walked up to a spot where Shri Krishna could see him. Shri Krishna caught sight of him. At once, He put Rukmini aside, jumped off the bed, and came running towards Sudama. He caught Sudama warmly, hugged him, and said, "Friend! I'm meeting you after ages! Where were you all these days?"

You see, the Shrimad Bhagwat says that Sudama went straight to Shri Krishna. But the 'Sudama Charit' written by Shri Narottamdasji says that Sudama first met the doorman, who went to Shri Krishna, saying –

सीस पगा न झगा तनमें प्रभु  
जानेको आहि बसै केहि ग्रामा।  
धोती फटी-सी लटी दुपटी अरु  
पाँय उपानहकी नहि सामा।।  
द्वार खड़ो द्विज दुर्बल एक  
रह्यो चकि सो बसुधा अभिरामा।  
पूछत दीनदयालको धाम  
बतावत आपनो नाम सुदामा।।

*Seesa pagaa na jhagaa taname` prabhu  
Jaane`ko aahi basai ke`hi graamaa,  
Dhoti fate-see latee dupatee aru  
Paanya upaanahakee nahi saamaa.  
Dvaar khado dvija durbala e`ka  
Rahyo chaki so basudhaa abhiraamaa,  
Poochata deenadayaalako dhaama  
Bataavata aapano naama sudaamaa.*

"Sir, a man has come at the door. He has no headwear, no proper coat, his clothes are old and tattered. He is so emaciated that people wonder at him. He asks where You live, and calls himself Sudama."

As soon as the Lord heard Sudama's name, He ran and embraced His friend. He said –

ऐसे बेहाल विवाइन सो पग

कंटक जाल लगे पुनि जोये ।  
हाय महादुःख पायो सखा  
तुम आये इतै न कितै दिन खोये ।।  
देखि सुदामा की दीन दसा  
करुणा करके करुणानिधि रोये ।  
पानी परातको हाथ छुयौ नहि  
नैननके जलसों पग धोये ।।

*Aise` be`haal vivaaina so paga  
Kantaka jaala lage` puni joye`,  
Haaya mahaadukha paayo sakhaa  
Tuma aaye` itai na kitai dina khoye`.  
De`khi sudaamaakee deena dasaa  
Karunaa karake` karunaanidhi roye`,  
Paanee paraatako haatha chuyau nahi  
Nainanake jalason paga dhoye`.*

How do I clarify this? You must all be familiar with Narottamdas' poems, called savaiyas. I will only say that Shri Krishna washed Sudama's hands and feet with His tears. Such a devotee of Brahmins is Shri Krishna! Luxury and wealth are appreciable only when used to serve the poor and the learned. Actually, both the poor and the learned are forms of the Lord, but poverty is contained within the person who is poor, while the learned person can expand his learning by creating thousands of scholars. So, service to the दरिद्र नारायण '*daridra naraayana*'\* must certainly be undertaken. The service to the learned, however, is of special importance. That is why our scriptures say that a donation given to a learned Brahmin protects and expands our Dharma and culture.

So, Shri Krishna brought Sudama into His palace. He arranged for Sudama's bath, and wrapped His own pitambar round his shoulders. He gave the Brahmin a new sacred thread, applied sandal paste on his forehead, and served a delicious meal. Then the Lord made Sudama sit on His own bed, and worshipped him, along with all his Queens.

Preachers say that Shri Krishna's Queens came, one by one. They would worship Sudama and sprinkle flowers on his head, and offer him a sweet. Sudama would then give the formal blessing, सौभाग्यवती भव, पुत्रवती भव, पतिप्रिया भव '*Saubhagyavati bhava\**, *Putravati bhava\**, *Patipriyaa bhava\**'. After the first few hundred Queens had worshipped him, Sudamaji asked, "How many more are there?" Shri Krishna signaled to him, to keep quiet. However, how



many sweets could Sudama possibly eat? He began to take a few crumbs from each. Then, even that became difficult. Sudama started to touch the sweets to his lips, and put them aside. Servants were needed to wipe the sandal paste from his forehead, and remove the flowers sprinkled on his head! Instead of saying the whole six word blessing, he started to say only the last word, “Bhava-Bhava”. As the numbers of sixteen thousand Queens came closer, it was shortened further, to “Bho-Bho”!

This, however, is not given in the Bhagwat. It is the preachers who say this, to make their audience laugh.

Later on at night, Shri Krishna began to talk to Sudama about their days at the Gurukul\*. “We used to live as equals,” recalled Shri Krishna. “We had no feeling of who was bigger or smaller. We went, just like the other students, to collect firewood for cooking. Surely, you remember how worried our Guruji was, one day, when we got stuck in the forest due to a sudden storm?”

Shri Krishna spoke about their days at Guruji’s Ashram with great appreciation. They passed the night in reminiscences.

Next morning, when it was time for Sudama to leave, Shri Krishna thought to Himself, “I must protect the excellent qualities of My Brahmin friend, and respect his superior qualities of wisdom and detachment. This is an ascetic who desires nothing. He has never worshipped Me with any thought of material benefit. None the less, his wife hopes to get relief from their extreme poverty. It is My duty to look after those who are the dependent of those who depend upon Me.”

With this in mind, Shri Krishna asked Sudama, “Brahman Devta, have you brought anything for Me?” Sudama felt acutely embarrassed. He tried to hide the little bundle of four fistful of rice flakes – which exposed the entire history of his poverty – under his armpit. How could he open it and offer such stuff to the Lord?

The Lord Shri Krishna, however, abides in every heart, and knows what is there. He snatched the little bundle, and had one fistful of the assorted rice flakes. He was about to eat one more, when Rukmini caught His hand. “Won’t You let us have the Prasad\* from the Brahmin? By eating one fistful, You have granted him all the wealth of the world. If you eat a second fistful, we will all be obliged to go to his house and serve him.”

So saying, Rukmini took some rice flakes, and distributed the rest to others. Everybody got the Prasad from the Brahmin’s house.

Despite all this, Shri Krishna sent Sudama off empty handed. During the journey home, Sudama began to think, “Just see how much respect Shri Krishna has for Brahmins! He embraced me, and allowed me to touch His

heart – the same heart, which is the abode of Laxmi! Not only that, He made me sleep on the very bed Laxmi sleeps on. He pressed my feet, with His hands, to serve me!

As for the wealth, He must have thought that I may become intoxicated by it, and forget Him, and lose the wealth of devotion gathered so far.

Just see – where am I, a poor, lowly person; and where is the Shriniketan\* Shri Krishna! Still, He accepted me as a Brahmin, and caught me in His arms, and hugged me” –

क्वाहं दरिद्रः पापीयान् क्व कृष्णः श्रीनिकेतनः ।

ब्रह्मबन्धुरिति स्माहं बाहुभ्यां परिरम्भितः ॥ १०.८१.१६.

*Kvaaham daridrah paapeeyaan kva krishnah shreennike`tanah,*

*Brahmabandhuriti smaaham baahubhyaam parirambhitah.*

10. 81. 16.

Sudama walked on, blissfully engrossed in such thoughts, towards his village. He saw a fabulous city, with large palaces. He thought he must have lost his way and gone back to Dwarka. He was trying to sort out his thoughts, when his wife came to welcome him. She was beautifully dressed with all the ornaments. A musical band accompanied her.

Sudama understood that this was the Leela of his beloved Shri Krishna. “Just as the clouds shower rain while we sleep, and depart silently, so also my beloved Shri Krishna does not allow anyone to see that it is He who gives.”

This, actually, is the proper method for doing daan. The more secret it is kept, the stronger will be its effect upon the antahkaran of the donor.

Sudama was immersed in supreme bliss. He remained detached all his life, using all his possessions as belonging to God. In the end, he attained the Lord, as a result of his Bhakti.

The next episode is of the total Solar eclipse, when people gathered from all over Bharat, to the pilgrim spot of Kurukshetra, and its surrounding areas, as directed by the Vedas.

The Solar eclipse is like a mark, or black spot, which mars knowledge. The Sun symbolizes Brightness and Knowledge, the essence of which is the intellect; and the mark is the feelings of attachment, detachment, pain of separation, and the joy of being united. There are nine ‘grahas’ in the sky, although these days people speak of more. However many there may be, they are all in the sky! However, the aagraha, duraagraha\*, vighraha\*, samgraha\*, are also grahas which block innate knowledge. That is why it is said, बुद्धेः फलमनाग्रहः ‘buddhe`h falamanaagrahah’ (Wisdom brings non-insistence in life).

That is why all the people went to Kurukshetra, to undertake the Vedic ritual of Yagya. Kurukshetra is the holy ground where the Devtas do Yagyas – देवयज्ञं कुरुक्षेत्रं *de`vayagyam kurukshe`tram*. The people go there and remove the smudge of the eclipse, by bathing, doing Yagyas, and praying to the Lord. This eclipse of Gnan should not be tolerated even for a short while.

So, during the Solar eclipse, the people of Dwarka and Vraja also came to Kurukshetra, as did people from other States. Everybody met all the others who had come. The men met the men and the ladies met the ladies.

Nanda-Vasudev met after a long, long time. Vasudevji embraced Nandababa joyfully. They began to recall every incident, of how Kansa had harassed them, and how Vasudevji had taken his son to Gokul, and left him at Nandaji's house.

Shri Krishna and Balaramji bowed at the feet of Nandababa and Yashoda Maiya. They hugged them close, unable to utter a single word. Their throats were choked with overwhelming love. The condition of Nanda-Yashoda was identical. They clung to the two brothers, and made them sit on their laps. Their sorrowful years of separation were erased from their hearts.

When Rohini and Devki met Yashoda, they embraced her warmly, and said, “Yashodaji, you are the Queen of Vraja. We can never forget the great friendship and family feeling shown by you and King Nanda. You are the true parents of our sons, Balaram-Krishna. You have protected them the way a person protects the pupils of his eyes, and brought them up with great love.”

The Gopis also saw their beloved Shri Krishna after a long time. They embraced Him mentally, as they looked at Him. Seeing how engrossed they were in Him, Shri Krishna went to them. He asked about their well-being, and then said, smilingly, “Gopis, you must be despising Me, in your heart of hearts. You must be thinking what a traitor I am, to leave you in that manner. But, such enormous tasks stood before Me, that I was forced to get involved in tackling them.

Gopis, one needs love, and work, and Gnan, in life. The entire Creation is a sport of Mine, and I am the Paramatma. Just as an earthen vessel is made of clay, ripples are made of water, flames are made of fire, the wind is made of air, and the sky fills the sky inside every creature, it is only I which is the world. The Atma which pervades every soul is MY essence, and it is also your essence.”

The Lord thus instructed the Gopis in such a way that their concept of individuality was dissolved, and they mentally merged into His essence.

अध्यात्मशिक्षया गोप्य एवं कृष्णेन शिक्षिताः ।  
तदनुस्मरणध्वस्तजीवकोशास्तमध्यगन् । १०.८२.४८.

*Adhyaatmashikshayaa gopya e`vam krishne`na shikshitaah,*  
*Tadanusmaranadhvasta – jeevakoshaastamadhyagan.*  
10. 82. 48.

The fact is that the Gopis had total faith in Shri Krishna. They had boundless love and a fathomless Bhakti. Where there is so much faith and love, the speech of the speaker goes straight into the depths of the heart, and brings about an instantaneous change in the life of the one who listens. This is how the Gopis were affected.

Still, they said, “Our beloved Shyamsundar, certainly we are not jeevas - we are nitya\*, shuddha\*, buddha\*, mukta\*. But, we also desire that so long as we have our bodies, our hearts should be filled with love for You. When this body is given up, we will be one with You” –

आहुश्च ते नलिननाभ पदारविन्दं योगेश्वरैर्हृदि विचिन्त्यमगाधबोधैः ।  
संसारकूपपतितोत्तरणावलम्बं गेहंजुषामपि मनस्युदियात् सदा नः ।। १०.८२.४९.

*Aahushcha te`nalinanaabha padaaravindam yoge`shvarairhridi*  
*Vichintyamagaadhabodhaih,*  
*Sansaarakoopapatitottaranaavalambam ge`hamjushaamapi manasyudiyaat*  
*Sadaa nah.*  
10. 82. 49.

The meeting of Shri Krishna’s Queens and Draupadi is described next. Draupadi asked Rukmini, Satyabhama, Jambavati, Kalindi, Mitravinda, Satya, Bhadra, and Laxmana – the eight principal Queens, and also some of the others – to tell her the story of their marriages.

All expressed their love and devotion for Shri Krishna, as they narrated the story of their marriage. Laxmana said, “Just as your Father had kept the condition of targeting a fish, my Father had kept a similar condition. The only difference was that the fish was covered – only its reflection could be seen in the water. Jarasandh, Shishupal, Duryodhan, Karna, and other great warriors – including your brave husband Arjuna – came, but none could hit the target. In the end, my Lord achieved it playfully, and I was married to Him.”

Hearing this, Draupadi’s false impression - that only her husband had won her by skilled archery, and that he was an incomparable archer – was banished.

Then, Rohini spoke on behalf of the sixteen thousand wives, “Noble Draupadi, we are very happy to have the Lord as our husband. We desire no luxuries. We do not even desire a universal Monarch, or the highest position. Our only desire is to always get the dust of the feet of our Beloved – the same dust, which Laxmiji applies to her chest”.

न वयं साध्वि साम्राज्यं स्वाराज्यं भौज्यमप्युत ।

वैराज्यं पारमेष्ठ्यं च आनन्त्यं वा हरेः पदम् ॥

कामयामह एतस्य श्रीमत्पादरजः श्रियः ।

कुचकुङ्कुमगन्धाढ्यं मूर्ध्ना वोढुं गदाभृतः ॥ १०.८३.४१-४२.

*Na vayam saadhvi saamraajyam svaaraajyam bhaujyamapyuta,*

*Vairaaajyam paarama`shthayam cha aanantyaam vaa hare`h padam.*

*Kaamayaamaha e`tasya shreematpaadarajah shriyah,*

*Kuchakunkumagandhaadhyam moordhnaa vodhum godaabhritah.*

10. 83. 41 – 42.

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj told Parikshit that Draupadi was not the only one who heard the loving words of the wives of Shri Krishna. Kunti, Gandhari, Subhadra, the Gopis, and others were also listening. They were all entranced to see the deep love Shri Krishna’s wives had for Him.

Then all the great Sages – Vyas, Narad, Chyavan, Deval, Asit, Vishwamitra, Vasishtha, Bhrigu, Kashyap, Markandeya, Vrihaspati, Sanakadi, and others, who had come to Kurukshetra for the Solar eclipse, came to meet them. Shri Krishna-Balaram rose to greet them, with full respect, asked them to be seated on appropriate seats, and did the ritual worship of sixteen offerings. Then Shri Krishna began to eulogize them. “Mahatmas, and all present,” He said. “Our lives are fulfilled today. The Yogeshwaras, who are rarely glimpsed by any, stand before us today. The pilgrimage with holy water is not the only place for worship. The stone or clay images are not the only Devtas. The fact is that the Saints are the pilgrimages and the Devtas. If we can serve them for even one or two ghadis\*, it erases all our sins and suffering – धन्ति मुहूर्तसेवया *dhnanti muhoorta se`vayaa`.*”

In the end, the Lord Shri Krishna said, “Those who consider this body, made of phlegm, wind and bile, to be their Atma, believe their wife and relatives to be the only ones worth loving, and consider the images made of the five elements, the only ones worthy of worship; and they who never show respect or extend a welcome to the Mahatmas, the source of the gift of Knowledge, are just like donkeys, in spite of being human.”

यस्यात्मबुद्धिः कुणपे त्रिधातुके

स्वधीः कलत्रादिषु भौम इज्यधीः ।  
यत्तीर्थबुद्धिः सलिले न कर्हिचि-

ज्जनेष्वभिज्ञेषु स एव गोखरः ॥ १०.८४.१३.

*Yasyaatmabuddhih kunape` tridhaatuke`  
Svadheeh kalatraadishu bhauma iyyadheeh,  
Yatteerthabuddhih salile` na karhichi-  
Jjane`shvabhigye`shu sa e`va gokharah.  
10. 84. 13.*

The Mahatmas were moved to the core, to hear such words of praise for Saints, from the lips of the Lord Shri Krishna, Himself. They discussed amongst themselves, “This is the Lord’s way of ensuring public welfare. He said this to teach people what is right and proper, so that their respect for Mahatmas increases. Else, it is the Lord who is the object of our worship.”

The Mahatmas eulogized the Lord Shri Krishna after this. They took leave of Him, Yudhishtira, Dhritarashtra, and the others, and got ready to leave. Before they could go, however, Vasudevji entered, and begged the Mahatmas to give a sermon about what Yagya he should do, to be liberated from the fruits of his actions.

Naradji remarked, “Mahatmas, what an amazing fact that the Lord Incarnate, Shri Krishna, is at the home of Vasudevji. And yet, he desires to undertake some action, to be liberated from the bondage of action!”

सन्निकर्षो हि मर्त्यानामनादरणकारणम् ।

गाङ्गं हित्वा यथान्याम्भस्तत्रत्यो याति शुद्धये ॥ १०.८४.३१.

*Sannikarsho hi martyaanaamanaadaranakaaranam,  
Gaangam hitvaa yathaanyaambhastatratyo yaati shuddhaye`.  
10. 84. 31.*

We fail to realize the importance of something we have, close at hand. People, who live on the banks of the Ganga, go to bathe in other holy places, to purify themselves.

The Mahatmas said, “Vasudevji, the way to be liberated from the fruit of action, is to worship the Lord through the work you do. You are already free of the debt of the Rishis, and your ancestors. Now, undertake a Yagya to repay the debt of the Devtas.”

Vasudevji requested the Mahatmas to undertake the Yagya for him, and organized a grand Yagya. He took the formal vows, along with his wives. When the Yagya was over, everybody had the Avabhrata Snan\*. The Mahatmas returned to their homes, well pleased. The relatives, who had

come for this, also went back. Nandababa's group stayed on for three months, with Shri Krishna, Balaram and the Yaduvanshis. This time was spent joyfully. Ultimately, Nandababa left for Vraja with his group, and Shri Krishna left, with His family, for Dwarka.

Shri Krishna-Balaram had made it a custom to go every morning, to touch the feet of their parents, Devki-Vasudev. Our Teachers tell us that the person who bows down every day to the elders in the family, is blessed with four things – long life, learning, renown, and strength.

अभिवादनशीलस्य नित्यं वृद्धोपसेविनः ।

चत्वारि तस्य वर्द्धन्ते आयुर्विद्या यशो बलम् ॥

*Abhivaadanasheelasya nityam vridhhopase`vinah,*  
*Chatvaari tasya vardhante`aayurvedyaa yasho balam.*

One day, when Shri Krishna-Balaram went to bow down to Vasudev-Devki, as per their custom, Vasudev recalled the words of the Mahatmas, extolling Shri Krishna's greatness. He began to eulogize Shri Krishna, saying, "You are the manifest Parabrahma Paramatma."

Shri Krishna replied, "Father, just as elders tell their children about 'Tattvamasi', in the same way, you are counseling Me. Now regarding My being the Brahman, well, you are also the Brahman, and so is My Mother, and so is Dau Dada, and all the people of Dwarka. So much so, that the entire moving and unmoving world is the essence of the Brahman."

Devki then prayed, "Please bring back my dead sons, from wherever they may be, because You brought back the son of Your Guru." Shri Krishna obeyed His mother. Along with Balaramji, He sought the aid of the Yoga Maya, and went to Satal Loka.

King Bali welcomed them warmly, worshipped them, eulogized them, and saw them off – along with their six brothers. Devki was filled with joy to see her sons, and she fed them at her breast. Then they turned into Devtas, bid farewell to all, and returned to Dev Loka.

Raja Parikshit prayed to Shri Shukadevji, "Sir, you have not told me how my Grandmother, Subhadra, married my Grandfather, Arjuna."

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj said, "Well, Parikshit, listen to the story of your Grandmother's marriage. As you know, Subhadraji was the sister of Balaramji and Shri Krishna. Balaramji wanted that she should be married to Duryodhan, but neither did Vasudev-Devki want this match, nor did Shri Krishna. Even the Pandavas disapproved. They planned amongst themselves, and Arjuna began to live at Dwarka, in the guise of a Monk.

One day Balaramji invited Arjuna – thinking him to be a Monk – to their house, for a meal. Arjuna met Subhadra that day, and they fell in love. When she went to worship the Goddess, Arjuna abducted her from the temple.

Balaramji was extremely angry, but Shri Krishna caught his feet, saying, “Subhadra is our sister, and she is at the proper age for marriage. Moreover, she loves Arjuna. Hence, what have we lost, if Arjuna abducted her?”

Balaramji calmed down, and got Subhadra married to Arjuna. Abhimanyu was born to the same Subhadra. He was married to Uttara. You are the son of the same Uttara-Abhimanyu.

After this comes the episode of the Brahmin named Shrutadev and the King Bahulaashva, of Mithila. Both were great devotees of the Lord Shri Krishna. Normally, it is seen that it is the devotees who go to the Lord; but our Lord Shri Krishna, is such that He cannot restrain Himself from meeting those who love Him. So, one day, He set off to meet Shrutadev and Bahulaashva. The Lord, however, did not go alone. Accompanying Him were Vyas, Vasishtha, Shukadev, Vaamdev, and other great Sages. Their journey commenced from Dwarka and reached Mithilapuri. On the way, people would obtain a glimpse of them welcome them, worship them, and hold spiritual discourses. Thus, they reached Mithilapuri happily.

When they arrived at Mithila, both the Brahmin Shrutadev and the Bahulaashva, King of Mithila, came to Shri Krishna and the Sages. Both folded their hands and prayed to the group to accept their hospitality.

Now, what was the Lord to do? If He went to the King’s palace, people would say that He was greedy, and went to the King because of the rich gifts He would receive. If He went to the Brahmin, people would say that He honored the Brahmin, but dishonored the King. The King is also a Devta, as is a Brahmin. So, they should be shown equal respect.

The Lord Shri Krishna found a way to satisfy both His devotees. He decided to duplicate Himself, and all the Sages accompanying Him, as well as the servants, horses, chariots, etc. One batch went to Shrutadev’s hut, and the other to King Bahulaashva’s palace.

Shrutadev had nothing to welcome the guests with. He only had a little saavan\* and cool water, and a straw mat to sit on. He invited the Lord and the Sages to sit on the straw mat. Waving his dupatta, he danced with joy, and said, “It is my great good fortune, that You all have come here.”

The batch which went to King Bahulaashva, received a tremendous reception. The King served them in keeping with his status.

Seeing the condition of the two devotees, the Lord created one more marvel. That is, He stayed for only one day at Shrutadev’s hut, with His group, but that one day equaled thirty days at Raja Bahulaashva’s palace!



Within the same period of Time, both eulogized the Lord, and He told them the way to attain the Supreme Truth. He said, “Whether a pot is filled with Gangajal\*, or whether it is filled with wine, it always has earth in it. The pot is the result of an action. It is a shape, and it is a name. It may perish, but the clay of which it is made, cannot be destroyed. So, the ultimate Truth is the clay.”

In the same way, the Lord explained to them, as to what material the world – including Shri Narayana, Shri Balaramji, and His own form – is made of. He also explained the way in which the Truth should be realized.

After listening to this teaching, Shrutadev and Bahulaashva both acquired the essence of the Lord. The Lord and the Sages with Him, took leave, and departed. Once out of the two homes, the two groups merged, and returned to Dwarka. Shrutadev felt that the Lord had been his guest, and Bahulaashva felt that the Lord had come to his palace. Thus, the Lord simultaneously satisfied both.

Parikshit asked, “Sir, the Lord is nirguna, nirakar, and nirvikar, so how are words used (to define Him)? How do the words of the Vedas describe That, which is beyond the cause (sat) and the effect (asat)?”

ब्रह्मन् ब्रह्मण्यनिर्देश्ये निर्गुणे गुणवृत्तयः ।

कथं चरन्ति श्रुतयः साक्षात् सदसतः परे ॥ १०.८७.१.

*Brahman brahmanyanireshye`nirgune`gunavrittayah,*

*Katham charanti shrutayah saakshaat sadasatah pare`.*

10. 87. 1.

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj explained, “You see, Parikshit, when we are seated in the body, we see the world. This body is seen within the world. The body contains the sense organs, intellect, and the Atma. How did these manifest? The body manifested in order to perform and experience the fruits of religious and other actions. The sense organs manifested in order to experience the world. The mind manifested to take decisions about accepting or rejecting these experiences, and also to develop goodwill and Bhakti. The intellect manifested in order to ponder upon all these. In this manner, all the jeevs live in order to achieve the four Purusharthas of Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha.”

To clarify this further, Shri Shukadevji Maharaj narrated a tale, which goes like this – One day Naradji went to the Sveta-dveepa\*. There, he obtained an excellent opportunity to listen to the talks of the Sanakadis. Sanaka-Sanandan-Sanatana-Sanatkumar, are all equal. However, when it is time for

Satsang, they ask one to become the preacher, while the remaining three become the audience.

During the Satsang, the Sanakadis said that just as a King sleeps at night, and is awoken every morning by panegyrists singing his praises, in the same way, the Lord sleeps in the Yoga-nidra\* after the Maha-pralay\*, and the Shrutis wake Him with auspicious songs.

Or, just as Shri Radha-Krishna frolic in a garden, and the companions of Radhaji wake them by singing their praises, the Shrutis wake the Lord by praising Him.

This incident in the Shrimad Bhagwat, is such that the maximum number of commentaries are available on it. The tradition of Shri Shankaracharya, Shridhar Swami, Veeraghavacharya of the tradition of Ramanujacharya, Vijaydhvaja of Shri Madhavacharya tradition, and Shudadev of Shri Nimbarkacharya tradition – all the representatives of these traditions have written commentaries. Now, enjoy the concise words of those Shrutis.

जय जय जह्यजामजित दोषगृभीतगुणां  
त्वमसि यदात्मना समवरुद्धसमस्तभगः ।  
अगजगदोकसामखिलशक्त्यवबोधक ते ।  
क्वचिदजयाऽऽत्मना च चरतोऽनुचरेन्निगमः ॥  
बृहदुपलब्धमेतदवयन्त्यवशेषतया  
यत उदयास्तमयौ विकृतेर्मृदि वाविकृतात् ।  
अत ऋषयो दधुस्त्वयि मनोवचनाचरितं  
कथमयथा भवन्ति भुवि दत्तपदानि नृणाम् ॥ १०.८७.१४-१५.

*Jaya jaya jahyajaamajita doshagribheetagunaam,  
Tvamasi yadaatmanaa samavaruddhasamastabhagah.  
Agajagadokasaamakhilashaktyavabodhaka te`,  
Kvachidajayaatmanaa cha charatonuchare`nnigamah.  
Vrihadupalabdhame`tadavayantyavashe`shatayaa,  
Yata udayaastamayau vikrite`rmridi vaavikritaat.  
Ata rishayo dadhustvayi manovachanaacharitam,  
Kathamayathaa bhavanti bhuvi dattapadaani nrinaam.  
10. 87. 14-15.*

This meter is called the ‘Naraputak Chanda’. Amongst all the stutis which eulogize the principal essence of the Vedas in the Shrimad Bhagwat, this is considered to be the most superior. Through logic, and the Shrutis, and experience, it describes the ultimate essence of the Lord.

The Shrutis say, “Oh Lord, Glory to You! Glory to You! The world, Kama and Krodha are gaining victory in our hearts.”

“Then why don’t you establish your victory over them?”

We can’t do that, because Maya, which shows many where only one exists, has trapped us.”

“Then go ahead and kill this Maya.”

“No, Lord, she can not be killed by our strength. Only by Your power can she be destroyed.”

“Oh, Shrutis, how did you find out that it is My power which is in all?”

The Shrutis said, “You frolic sometimes with Maya, and sometimes with Action. At that time, we describe You as the end of life. Whether the name is Agni, Indra, or some other, it is You, the one Paramatma, who is pervaded (anusyut) in all that exists. Those who do not meditate upon You, or sing with devotion, lose their way in this world. This Creation is actually non-existent in Your essence.”

In the end, the Shrutis say, फलन्त्यतन्निरसेन भवन्निधनाः ‘*falantyatannirase`na bhavannidhanaah`*’, and negate everything except the Paramatma. They cancel everything, tie everything up, and then say, “Lord, You – only You remain. Let us be destroyed” –

तू प्रभु जीवै मै मर जाऊँ

*Tu prabhu jeevai mai mara jaaon.*

The Vedas do not remain, once the Paramatma is experienced, and ultimately they are dissolved into the Paramatma.

At the head of the Manomay Kosha\*, described in the Taittareeyopanishad, the Vedas are described with these words, “Lord, our purpose is to indicate You. The moment You are recognized, our work is over, and we merge into You.”

This is how the Sanakadis spoke of the Lord, who is the essence of all the Vedas, Puranas, and Itihasas\*. Naradji was very happy to hear this discourse.

Parikshit next raised the question, “What is the reason that those who worship Shankarji – who has given up all indulgences – are granted all worldly pleasures; while those who worship Laxmipati\* Lord Vishnu, end up completely without worldly pleasures?”

You must remember that the Shrimad Bhagwat is a Vaishnav Purana\*, and describes the glory of Vishnu. Similarly, the glory of the Lord Shiva is described in the Shiva Purana. There is nothing conflicting about this. The Chaitanya\* in Shiva is the Brahman, and so is the Chaitanya in Narayana.

They have two names and two forms, but the Brahman in both is one and the same. So, Shri Shukadevji Maharaj told Parikshit, “Shankarji is pleased very quickly. He is satisfied with very little. He is Aughad-daani\*. He never wants to keep anything for himself, so he distributes everything to his devotees. However, it takes a little longer to please the Lord Vishnu.”

The Mahatmas narrate an ancient episode, in this context. It is the story of Vrikaasura. A fire called Vrika abided in the stomach of this demon. He had heard from Naradji that the Lord Shankar can be propitiated very quickly. He undertook a penance for pleasing Lord Shankar. He cut off chunks of his own flesh, and put them in the sacrificial fire. When he prepared to cut his head off, Shankarji caught his hand, and told him, “Don’t cut off your head. I do not like you to do that. You may ask me for whatever you desire.”

Vrikaasura asked that he be given such a power that if he placed his hand on somebody’s head, that person would turn into ashes. Shankarji did not at all like to give such a boon, but he gave it, anyway.

As soon as Vrikaasura was granted the boon, he had a desire to abduct Gauriji - गौरीहरणलालसः ‘*gauriharanalaalasah*’. It is impossible to know what untrustworthy and wicked people may do, upon any occasion.

As soon as Vrikaasura got the desire to abduct Gauriji, he ran to place his hand on Shankarji’s head. Seeing this, Shankarji began to run, with Vrikaasura chasing him.

When this news reached the Lord Vishnu at Vaikunth, He quickly donned the garb of a Brahmachari, and came before Vrikaasura. “Oh, Vrikaasura,” He said, “Wait a moment. Why are you running so fast? Why do you strain yourself like this? Your breathing sounds as though you have a pair of bellows in your chest! And still you continue to run. Tell me, what is the matter?”

Vrikaasura said, “Shankarji has given me the boon, that if I put my hand on anyone’s head, he will turn into ashes. So, I want to place my hand on Shankarji head.”

The Lord Vishnu – dressed as a Brahmachari – said, “Oh! Shiva is mad! How on earth did you believe what he said? Can his boon ever be true? You should test it first.”

Vrikaasura said, “You are right – I should test it first, otherwise I’ll waste my energy in running. But Sir, where should I test it?”

The Lord Vishnu said promptly, “Oh, test it on your own head!”

Now see the Maya of the Lord Vishnu! Vrikaasura accepted His suggestion, put his hand on his own head, and turned into ashes on the spot.

Shankarji could now stop running. The Lord Vishnu told him, “Please don’t grant such boons any more!” Then they both returned to their own lands.

After this, Shri Shukadevji Maharaj told Parikshit, “There was once a gathering of Sages on the bank of the river Saraswati. The question was raised, that – of Brahma-Vishnu-Mahesh – who was the greatest Devta? त्रिष्वधी किं ब्रह्मा-विष्णु-महेश *‘Trishvadheeshe`shu ko mahaan?’*

The task of finding out was delegated to Bhriguji.

Accordingly, Bhriguji went first to Brahmaji. Brahmaji thought, “My son has come. It is a happy occasion.” However, Bhriguji stood arrogantly before Brahmaji, like a pillar. Neither did he bow his head before his father, nor did he fold his hands. He did not even touch his father’s feet. Seeing this lack of decorum on Bhriguji’s part, Brahmaji felt very annoyed. However, what could he do? Should he curse, or punish his own son? One is compelled to tolerate the misbehaviors of one’s own son. The ones who tax our forbearance the most, are our relatives. Therefore, Brahmaji tolerated this insolence silently.

However, nothing remained hidden from Bhriguji. Coming back from there, he went to Shankarji. Seeing him, Shankarji came forward to meet him, saying, “My brother has come!” But Bhriguji said, “Oh – don’t touch me! You wear a garland of skulls round your neck, apply ash from the crematorium on your body, and go about with snakes wrapped round you, as though they were ornaments!”

Shankarji was furious, when he heard this. He chased Bhriguji with his Trishul\*. However, Gauriji caught his feet, saying, “Lord, he is a Brahmin, and your brother. Please don’t kill him.” Shankarji let Bhriguji go.

After that, Bhriguji went to the Lord Vishnu. He neither looked at the doorkeepers, nor did he look at Laxmiji. He went straight to the Lord Vishnu, who lay reclined on His Sheshashaiya, and kicked Him on the chest. The Lord Vishnu quickly caught Bhriguji’s foot, and began to stroke it gently. “Sir,” He said, “My chest is very hard and your feet are very tender, so you must have got hurt. Had I known that you would be coming, I would have come forward in welcome.”

Bhriguji was delighted and entranced to see the humility of the Lord. He went to the gathering of the Mahatmas, and narrated the whole story. All the Mahatmas were very pleased, and said, “The one who is forgiving and tolerant, is the essence of the Lord. The one who is easily angered is not worthy of worship.” In the end, the Mahatmas decided unanimously, that only the Lord Vishnu is worthy of worship.

The story given next is the story of a Brahmin who lived in Dwarka. Every son he had, would die after being born. This happened eight times. The Brahmin would bring the body of his dead son, to the door of King Ugrasen. He would say, “My son’s untimely death is due to the impure actions of this

King. Had the King been righteous, my sons would not die thus, before their time.”

Arjuna was present, when the Brahmin came with the body of his ninth son, and began to talk abusively, as usual. Arjuna said, “Oh Brahman Devta, I will now protect your next son. Balaramji is here, the Lord is here, Aniruddha is here – but so what? If I do not succeed in saving your next son, I will burn myself to death on a funeral pyre.”

The tenth son of the Brahmin was born. Not only did he not survive, but even the lifeless body vanished. Arjuna went to other lands, even to Yamapuri, but failed to find the dead son. Ultimately, he prepared a funeral pyre, to keep his vow of burning himself to death.

The Lord Shri Krishna said, “Don’t do that, Arjuna. We will go to look for him.” The Lord Shri Krishna took Arjuna to the land of Mahavishnu\*. The Lord Mahavishnu was very happy to meet Shri Krishna and Arjuna.

You see, with regard to this episode, the people of the tradition of Shri Ramanujacharya say, “Our Mahavishnu, or Mahanarayana, is so great! Shri Krishna had to prostrate Himself, before He could enter.”

However, the tradition of Gaudeshwara answer to this is, “Our Shri Krishna is so beautiful, so full of sweetness, so lovable, that Mahanarayana called Him to his abode, to have a glimpse of Him.”

Such talk, however, is caused by one’s reverence for the chosen image of the Lord. The Lord Shri Krishna returned from the land of Mahavishnu, with the Brahmin’s dead sons. The Brahmin was overjoyed to have his dead sons alive again.

The last chapter of the tenth Skandha contains a description of the Lord Shri Krishna’s Leelas’ frolics. The sweetest aspect in this is how the wives of the Lord Shri Krishna get overcome by the depth of their love. The intensity of their love causes them to lose their perspective. Their minds turn towards negative thoughts, and they begin to think of His leaving them. They feel that the ocean heaves with love for the Lord, the mountains stand unmoving, out of love for Shri Krishna, the osprey cries out because she is separated from Him, and the swan has brought a message from the Lord.

The wives of Shri Krishna would then experience separation, even when they were with the Lord. At times, when He was not there, they would feel that He is with them. Their mental condition was such that they were unable to see anything except Shri Krishna. An extremely elevated level of pure love manifested in their lives.

The condition of Shri Krishna’s principal wife, Rukmini, however, was quite different. She never experienced even mental separation from the Lord – she always felt that He was with her. So – as narrated earlier – Shri Krishna had

once suggested (when He saw some pride in her) that she should marry someone else. The result of this was that His words gave a momentary pain of separation, and she had lost consciousness.

The Gopis, however, were such, that neither did they ever feel that the Lord Shri Krishna was not with them, nor were they ever affected by viyoga. This is why Shri Krishna gave them the sorrow of physical separation, which caused extreme distress in the Gopis hearts. The depth of pure love can never be experienced without going through such distress.

Thus, the Leela of Shri Krishna's love, has three modes of expression – one is the love of Rukmini, the other is the love of His other wives, and the third is the love of the Gopis. Amongst the Gopis, is Shri Radharani's love, in which Shri Krishna is not parted from her for even one moment.

At the end, Shri Shukadevji Maharaj said, "Parikshit, the jewel in the Yaduvanshi crown, Shri Krishna, came and did His Leela, so that people could listen to all that He had done, sing about the Leelas, and dwell upon them mentally. They would get so immersed in the sweetness of the Leelas, that they would lose all awareness of the world around them. This is why the Dasama (tenth) Skandha is called the Nirodh Skandha.

What does Nirodh mean? People's minds wander hither and thither, in the world. Just as a dog goes from door to door – getting a stick at one door, and some food at another – the human mind also wanders in the same way. It needs a shelter in order to curtail its wanderings. This shelter is the unique fragrance which comes from the Lord's body. It is the unique sweetness of His Charanaamrita. It is the rippling sea of His incomparable beauty! It is His tender touch! It is the sweet sound of His flute! It is His divine music! His heavenly love!

A person should immerse himself in these, to an extent that the sorrows and troubles of the world cannot even enter his heart. The Lord Shri Krishna adopts an Avatar, and undertakes all his Leelas, so that everybody's minds get attracted towards Him, and intertwined within Him."

Ultimately, Shri Shukadevji Maharaj gives the Victory cry, "Victory to the Jewel in the Crown of the Yaduvanshis. Victory to Lord Shri Krishna, the son of Devki. Victory to Lord Shri Krishna, the son of Nanda. Victory to Lord Shri Krishna, the beloved of the Gopis. Victory to Lord Shri Krishna, who achieves the good of all."

The tenth Skandha ends with this Victory cry. Now we have tomorrow and the day after – two days left. I will use them to give you the essence of the eleventh and twelfth Cantos.

Om Shantih Shantih Shantih.

## BHAGWATAMRIT

### Pravarchan XIII

#### (Skandha XI)

The eleventh Skandha of the Shrimad Bhagwat is considered to be the Mukti Skandha, and is universally accepted as such. The first five chapters tell us how, through Bhakti and the qualities of the Bhaktas, people conquer the Maya which arises from Avidya, and attain liberation. The Mukti of the Jeeva is given in five chapters because Avidya has five knots – Avidya, asmita\*, raga\*, dvesha\*, and abhinivesha\*. The next twenty four chapters describe how liberation is obtained from the twenty four elements of Nature. The last two chapters show how to shed the drama of the Brahman. That is, how to discard the robe of make-believe, or remove the make-up of the role. And this is called Brahm-mukti\*. Thus, these thirty one chapters bring the eleventh Skandha to its conclusion.

The first chapter has an extraordinary incident. When a Yogi wants to advance in Yoga, he first has to adopt good qualities, to destroy negative tendencies. When he has used goodwill and compassion, and joy and lack of expectation, to counter inimical tendencies, he has to block even these good qualities, to attain Samadhi. He will not be able to attain Samadhi unless he succeeds in blocking all tendencies, because tendencies do not remain during Samadhi.

In the same way, it is explained in the first chapter of the eleventh Skandha, that the Lord Shri Krishna used the Yaduvanshis, Pandavas, and others, to destroy the demonic forces. Then, He negated the Yaduvanshis and Pandavas, to return to the natural essence of His Self.

Whether handcuffs and leg-shackles are made of iron, or of gold, they bind the hands and feet. So, Satsang is needed to be free from dusang\*. And, for establishing ourselves in the Self, a person has to be liberated even from Satsang. To reveal this Leela, the Lord Shri Krishna first had the wicked tendencies destroyed by the Pandavas. Then, only the Yaduvanshis remained. They destroyed themselves by fighting with each other.

कृत्वा निमित्तमितरेतरतः समेतान्

हत्वा नृपान् निरहरत् क्षितिभारमीशः । ११.१.२.

*Kritvaa nimittamitare`taratah same`taan,*



*Hatvaa nripaan niraharat kshitibhaarmeeshah.*

11. 1. 2.

Now, see – peace and compassion are both tendencies of Sattvaguna. However, when there is a clash between the two, the Yogi abandons compassion and chooses peace.

In the same way, the Lord used the instrument of mutual relatives, to completely destroy all the bad and good tendencies, and then departed for His abode.

When the time for their destruction came, Shri Krishna's sons went to test the very same Mahatmas who were worshipped by Shri Krishna. The youngsters dressed Samba, Jambavati's son, like a woman. Then they asked the Mahatmas, "Will she get a son or a daughter?"

Samba was born by the grace of the Sun. He was extremely good looking. Even the noblest of women would be fascinated when they saw him. The Mahatmas, however, recognized him because they were trikaladarshi. They were aware of what the Lord desired – भगवत्कोविदाः 'bhagavatkovidah'. They understood that when these youngsters – born in the lineage of the Lord – are so badly lacking in shraddha, it is a clear indication that the Lord wants to curtail, and fold up His lineage.

That is why the Mahatmas said, "You fools! Neither a daughter nor a son will be born. From inside the layers of cloth which you have wrapped round the stomach, a pestle will emerge, and this will be the cause of your lineage's destruction."

This made the Yaduvanshi youngsters very nervous. Still, they said nothing about it to Shri Krishna. This was the only incident to occur in Dwarka, which was not reported to Shri Krishna – rather, you can say that it was kept concealed from Him. In any case, the Lord was not unaware of it. He could have avoided the curse, had He wanted to, or changed it as He chose. However, He desired something different.

The youngsters went to Ugrasen, and told him what had happened. Even Ugrasen did not tell Shri Krishna about it. He advised the boys to crush the pestle to powder, and throw it into the sea. The youngsters did that, and it grew into a kind of grass, on the sea shore. A large, sharp chunk was left over, and was obtained by a hunter called Jara.

Now, you know Jara. Jara means old age, which comes to all. Everything gets old. The end of youth is Jara. It is old age. Even in the Gita, it is written,

जराव्याधिदुःखदोषानुदर्शनम्।

*Jaraavyaadhidukhadoshanudarshanam.*

The same Jara came as a hunter, and became the tool for the completion of the Lord's Leela. The Lord was satisfied that matters would end as He wished.

Naradji's dialogue with Vasudevji is given after this. I have been saying, right from the beginning, that meeting the Lord is not enough. Dhruva had a vision of the Lord, but still he got angry with the Yakshas. It was Swayambhuva Manu who calmed him down. Prithu also got angry after he had met the Lord. The Prachetas had a vision of both Lord Shankar and Lord Vishnu, and still they became extremely angry. They obtained Tattvagnan only when Naradji came and preached to them. Similarly, Shri Krishna failed to remove Yudhishthira's remorse – he was freed from it by Bhishmapitamah's discourses. The Shrimad Bhagwat has many such instances. That is why it is said that this is not a Bhagwat Purana – it is a Bahaagwat Purana – the Purana of the Bhaktas. The devotees of the Lord are praised even more than Him!

Take the example of Devki-Vasudev. They were the Mother and Father of the Lord. The Lord had granted them a vision of His four-armed form as soon as He was born. The Rishis had eulogized the Lord in their presence. They saw any number of the Lord's miracles – including the bringing back of their six dead sons. Despite all this, they did not attain Tattvagnan. So the Lord inspired Naradji, and he arrived to give them the instruction.

The fact was that the curse given by Daksha – that Naradji would not be able to stay at any place for long – did not apply at Dwarka. So, he would return to Dwarka, each time he was sent off. Sometimes, the Lord would send him to find out how things were, in Heaven. Sometimes he was asked to go to the Pandavas on some pretext. Naradji loved the Lord so much that he would find some excuse to return to Dwarka. The fact was that Shri Krishna was so beautiful that Naradji just had to keep returning, to gaze at Him.

को नु राजन्निन्द्रियवान् मुकुन्दचरणाम्बुजम् ।

न भजेत् सर्वतोमृत्युरुपास्यममरोत्तमैः ॥ ११.२.२.

*Ko nu raajannindriyavaan mukundacharanaambujam,*

*No bhaje't sarvatomrityurupaasyamamarottamaih.*

11. 2. 2.

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj told Raja Parikshit, "Which mortal man, possessing sound senses, would possibly neglect to obtain the divine fragrance of the lotus feet of the Lord, and listen to the sweet sound of His

voice? As a prime devotee of the Lord, it was natural for Naradji to possess an extraordinary devotion for Him.”

Now, who has the right to be a devotee of the Lord? Just as a Brahmin has the right to do the Vajpeya Yagya, a Kshatriya has the right to do a Rajasuya Yagya, a Vaishya has the right to do a Vashyastome Yagya, a Nishad\* has the right to do a Nishadasthapati Yagya, and a person who has all the qualities called Sadhan Chatushtay\* has the right to study Vedanta; in the same way, who has the right to develop Bhakti?

All the creatures who have sense organs have a right to devotion. Not only humans, even birds can gaze at the lord’s beauty, and even an animal can feel love for Him. Then, how can Naradji lag behind?

Hence, even when Naradji returned after having gone somewhere, the Lord sent him to Vasudevji. After giving him a warm welcome, Vasudevji asked Naradji, “Sir, in my past life, I had worshipped the Lord to get Him as my son. At that time I was deluded by His Maya. Now, I ask you to free me from that Maya, and counsel me so that I may obtain that, which is the most beneficial.”

Naradji was very happy to hear Vasudevji’s words. However, he had some reservations. He felt, “Vasudevji sees that I am the ‘aashik’\* of his son Shri Krishna; I am ‘aasakta’\* with Him.”

You see, aashik-aasakta come from the same root. Knowledge must be respected – we should not quarrel over words. We should obtain Knowledge regardless of which language it is given in. In the Manusmriti it is written that even if it comes from a low caste person, we should definitely strive to obtain the knowledge of the highest Dharma.

श्रद्धानः शुभां विद्यामाददीतावरादपि ।

अन्त्यादपि परमं धर्मं स्त्रीरत्नं दुष्कुलादपि ।।

*Shraddhaanah shubhaam vidyaamaadadeetaavaraadapi,*

*Antyaadapi paramam dharmam streeratnam dushkulaadapi.*

So, Naradji felt, “When Vasudevji sees that I am attached to his son, he may find me unsuitable as a counselor.” So, he began to narrate the story of the nine Yogishwaras\*. The names of these nine prime Yogis are Kavi, Hari, Antariksha, Prabuddha, Pippalaayana, Aavirhotra, Drumil, Chamasa and Karabhaajana.

कविहरिरन्तरिक्षः प्रबुद्धः पिप्पलायनः ।

आविर्होत्रोऽथ द्रुमिलश्चमसः करभाजनः ।। ११.२.२१.

*Kavirharirantarikshah prabuddhah pippalaayanah,*

*Aavirhotrotha drumilashchamasah karabhaajanah.*

11. 2. 21.

They were all supremely detached, on the highest level of detachment. They came from an excellent lineage, their detachment was superior, and their Knowledge was most superior. Shri Shukadevji Maharaj has described their experience thus –

त एते भगवद्रूपं विश्वं सदसदात्मकम्।

आत्मनोऽव्यतिरेकेण पश्यन्तो व्यचरन् महीम्॥ ११.२.२२.

*Ta e`te` bhagavadroopam vishvam sadasadaatmakam,*

*Aatmanoavyatire`ke`na pashyanto vyacharan maheem.*

11. 2. 22.

These Mahatmas saw the moving and unmoving world – including the gross and subtle – as the form of the Lord, and saw the Lord as being one with their own Self. According to their experience, the world is the work of the Lord. It is illumined by the Lord, is inseparable from the Lord, and the Lord is not separate from the Atma.

These nine Mahatmas, whose detachment is supreme, went once to the Yagya Mandap of Raja Nimi. Raja Nimi was renowned for his Yagyas. As soon as he saw the Mahatmas, Raja Nimi halted the worship, and got up – along with the Brahmins doing the ritual – and, carrying some of the sacrificial fire, went forth to greet them. After a ceremonious welcome, he asked them to be seated on singhasanas\*, and asked –

अत आत्यन्तिकं क्षेमं पृच्छामो भवतोऽनघाः। ११.२.३०.

*Ata aatyantikam kshe`mam prichhaamo bhavatonaghaah.*

11.2. 30

“Sirs, please instruct me upon what is best for me. Please tell me that, which is aatyantik and niruttar.”

‘Aatyantik’ means ‘that, after which no further happiness remains to be gained’, and ‘niruttar’ means, ‘after which nothing remains’. You can call it ‘laa-javaab’ or ‘laa-saani’.

When Raja Nimi placed these questions, the first Yogishwara, Kavi – who was a form of the Lord incarnate – began to preach.

“King, you must first know why the people in this world are unhappy. उद्विग्नबुद्धेरसदात्मभावत् ‘Udvignabudde`rasadaatmabhaavaat’ - the people in this world are unhappy because they consider that, which is untrustworthy,

transient, a form of sorrow, to be theirs. The Sansara\* does not belong to anybody. The Sansara is that, which can never be caught. That, which can never be abandoned, is the Atma, the Paramatma. Those who are busy trying to catch this Sansara are always agitated. Their intellect and mind are full of fearful possibilities. The treatment for this is to worship the Lotus feet of the Lord Achyut\*.

This entire world of duality is in the imagination of our mind, which is stuffed into us after our birth. Where the matters of Dharma are concerned – like serving our parents, loving our brothers and friends, showing compassion to those in distress, etc. – they are all right and proper. However, all worldly relationships have been superimposed in our minds. People told you, ‘This is your Mother’. Your Mother told you, ‘This is your Father’. The Brahmin said, ‘This is your wife; this is your husband’. Thus, all relationships are superimposed. So, the best of all is the worship of those lotus feet of the Lord, which never slip from their position.

This world is an illusion created by the mind’s imagination. So, it is important to control the mind. If it is not possible to achieve this through the practice of Yoga, then we should get engrossed in loving thoughts and songs of the Lord’s Leela and great qualities.”

शृण्वन् सुभद्राणि रथाङ्गपाणेर्जन्मानि कर्माणि च यानि लोके ।

गीतानि नामानि तदर्थकानि गायन् विलज्जो विचरेदसङ्गः ॥ ११.२.३९.

*Shrinvan subhadraani rathaangapaane`rjanmaani karmaani cha yaani loke`,*

*Geetani naamaani tadarthakaani gaayan vilajjo vichare`dasangah.*

11. 2. 39.

The Lord is ‘Rathangapani’\*. The Kalachakra\* is in His grip. All the situations – Creation, Existence, and Dissolution – are controlled by Him. When He saw His devotee, Arjuna in trouble, He picked up a chariot wheel, and ran to attack Bhishma. He did not bother about His vow to not take up arms in the Mahabharata war. He became Rathangapani.

आजु यदि हरिहिं न शास्त्र गहावों ।

तौ लाजों गंगा जननीको सन्तनुसुत न कहावों ॥

*Aaju yadi harihi na shastra gahaavon,*

*Tau laajau gangaa jananeeko santanusuta na kahaavon.*

So, Yogishwara Kavi says, “Chant, sing, and listen to the name and Leela of the Lord – who is so full of Fatherly love for His devotees.” It is not that

only the Vedic names are to be used. लोके च यानि गीतानि ‘*Loke`cha yaani geetaani`*’ – the people of Vraja take the name in their Rasiyaas\*, and the Mahatmas take the name of the Lord in their language. So, sing in your language. When you go on singing His name, your intellect will be filled with Him, and you will see Him everywhere. A love for Him will fill your heart, and your attention will be directed towards the essence of His form. Then you will be detached from the world, and only when you are attached (to Him), will you obtain an understanding of the essence of the Lord – भक्तिर्विरक्तिभगत्प्रबोधः ‘*bhaktirviraktibhagavatprabodhah`*’. Ultimately, you will obtain supreme peace.

Raja Nimi then asked, “What are the characteristics of a Bhakta?”

Hari, the second Yogishwara, explained.

सर्वभूतेषु यः पश्येद् भगवद्भावमात्मनः । ११.२.४५

*Sarvabhooteshu yah pashye`d bhagavadbhaavamaatmanah.*

11.2.45.

“My brother, don’t divide and separate the Lord, restricting Him to be this or that. Experience Him in everyone, experience Him as everything, and experience Him to be the Atma of all. Then you will be able to attain the highest degree of equanimity. This is the indication of a Bhakta of the highest kind.

He, who loves the Lord, feels friendly towards Bhaktas, helps those who suffer, and ignores those who oppose him, is a Bhakta of the second category.

Those who merely hold on to an image of the Lord, and its ritual worship – worshipping no one else – are elementary Bhaktas.”

The words, भक्तः प्राकृतः स्मृतः ‘*bhaktah praakritah smritah`*’ used here as basic, are explained by Shridhar Swami, as प्राकृतः प्रारम्भः ‘*praakritah praarambhah`*’ meaning, they are just beginners.

In this way, Hariji described the characteristics of the nirguna Bhakta in eight shlokas, and explained the characteristics of a saguna Bhakta in the last three shlokas. In describing the signs of a saguna Bhakta, he says,

त्रिभुवनविभवहेतवेऽप्यकुण्ठस्मृतिरजितात्मसुरादिभिविमृग्यात् ।

न चलति भगवत्पदारविन्दाल्लवनिमिशार्धमपि यः स वैष्णवाग्र्यः ।। ११.२.५३.

*Tribhuvanavibhavahe`tave`pyakunthasmritirajitaatmasuraadibhivimrigyaat, Na chalati bhagavatpadaaravindaallavanimishaardhamapi yah sa vaishnavaaagryah.*

11. 2. 53.

“The highest amongst the Bhaktas is he, who is unwilling to leave the lotus feet of the Lord, even if he is given all three worlds in exchange.”

भगवत उरुविक्रमाङ्घ्रिशाखानखमणिचन्द्रिकया निरस्ततापे । ११.२.५४.

*Bhagavata* *uruvikramaanghrishaakhaanakhamanichandrikayaa*  
*nirastataape`.*

11. 2. 54.

Worldly discomforts never trouble such a devotee. Those who are turned away from the Lord are the only ones who are sorrowful. The purifying memory of the Lord can not exist simultaneously with sorrow. Darkness exists only in the absence of light.

विसृजति हृदयं न यस्य साक्षाद्धरिरवशाभिहितोऽप्यघौघनाशः । ११.२.५५.

*Visrijati* *hradayam* *na* *yasya*  
*saakshaadhariravashaabhihitopyadhaudhanaashah.*

11. 2. 55.

The Lord is such that He destroys your sins if you take His name even out of helplessness. The true Bhakta is the one who has the Lord seated constantly on the lotus seat of his heart; who has tied the Lord with the string of love; and for whom, the glint of the Lord’s toe nail suffices to eliminate all darkness.”

After this, Raja Nimi asked, “What is Maya?” The third Yogishwara, Antariksha, answered, “Everything else, which you see in the Paramatma – like Creation, Existence and Dissolution – all this is called Maya, एषा माया भगवतः ‘e`shaa maayaa bhagvatah`.”

Raja Nimi then asked, “Please describe the method by which release from Maya can be obtained.” In reply, the fourth Yogishwara, Prabuddhaji, said, “You must first understand that the world is sorrow personified. Then you should surrender to a Sadguru\*. There, you should follow his instructions, given for your spiritual progress, and spend your time in listening to discourses, or chanting the names of the Lord, and His wonderful qualities. This makes one free of Maya.”

Raja Nimi asked his fifth question, “What is the Brahman?” It was answered by the Yogishwara Pippalaayana. “Our Lord’s characteristic is not to create the world and throw it away,” he said. “He is not such as to make the world – like one makes a pot, and send it to the market to be sold. Our Lord has a

direct relationship with the world; with its Creation, Sustenance and Dissolution. He does not roam in some seventh heaven. In fact, He manifests as this world. Our Ishwara always abides with us, whether we are awake, asleep, or dreaming, and even beyond these states” –

स्थित्युद्भवप्रलयहेतुरहेतुरस्य यत् स्वप्नजागरसुषुप्तिषु सद् बहिश्च । ११.३.३५.

*Sthityudbhavapralayahe`turahe`turasya*  
*Yat svapnajaagarasushuptishu sad bahishcha.*  
11. 3. 35.

Pippalaayana said, further, “The Brahman can be experienced only when the heart is pure. However, how can the heart be made pure? It is Bhakti, which purifies the heart.

यर्ह्यब्जनाभचरणैषणयोरुभक्त्या चेतोमलानि विधमेद् गुणकर्मजानि । ११.३.४०.

*Yarhyabjanaabhacharanaishanayorubhaktyaa*  
*Che`tomalaani vidhame`d gunakarmajaani.*  
11. 3. 40.

Bhakti is a desire for the feet of the Lord. Because, desire is pregnant – the lotus feet of the Lord abide in its stomach. Just as the thing we love, is in the stomach of desire, in the same way, the Lord’s feet come into the heart, when there is a desire to obtain them. This washes away the impurities of the mind. Then – one achieves the realization of the Paramatma.”

After this, a question was asked, by Raja Nimi, concerning actions (Karmas). In reply, the sixth Yogishwar, Aavirhotra said, “King, it is extremely difficult to understand karma, akarma\* and vikarma\* in this Sansara. Only the Lord, or the Mahatmas who have experienced His essence, know this. To come to an ill-considered conclusion, that ‘this is paapa\*’ and ‘this is punya\*’ is an indication of ignorance. Who is there – apart from the Paramatma – who has experienced paapa and punya? This is why the Lord does not see the right or wrong; He accepts whoever seeks His protection.

कोटि विप्र वध लागेहि जाहू ।

आये सरन तजो नहिं ताहू ।।

*Koti vipra vadha laage`hi jaahoo,*  
*Aaye`saran tajo nahi taahoo.*



The Lord does not view sin and merit the way you see it. Your good and bad actions do not weigh even as little as a light raindrop, on the scales of His infinity and non-duality. That is why the Lord accepts the one who surrenders to him.”

Aavirhotraji continued, “The antahkaran is purified by the actions prescribed in the Vedas and the Shastras.

वेदोक्तमेव कुर्वाणो निःसङ्गोऽर्पितमीश्वरे ।

नैष्कर्म्या लभते सिद्धिं रोचनार्था फलश्रुतिः ॥ ११.३.४६.

*Ve`doktame`va kurvaano nihsangorpitameeshvare`,*

*Naishkarmyaam labhate` siddhim rochanarthaa falashrutih.*

11. 3. 46.

So, the person who wants to be free from the bonds of action should worship the Lord through his actions. Karma is karma only when it is undertaken for worldly gain. It becomes Karmayoga\* when it is undertaken for the Lord, with a wish to serve the Lord who abides in all, and is free of any selfish motive.”

After this, when Raja Nimi asked about the Avatars of the Lord, the seventh Yogishwar, Drumil, said, “Raja, Avatara is a staircase, a flight of steps. A staircase is necessary, whether one wants to go up, or descend. You can experience the Brahman, when you investigate into the details of the Lord’s Avataras – for the purpose of realizing the Brahman.”

The Lord has created the panchabhootas\* within Himself. When He creates the Brahmanda\*, and enters into it – as the one who abides in all – that Adideva\*, Narayana, is called the Purusha. This is His final Avatara. It is He, who – as Brahma, creates the world; it is He, who – as Vishnu, sustains it; and – as Rudra, destroys it. It is He who came as the Nara-Narayana\*, and continues to do tapasya to protect the world. Once Indra saw their tapasya and feared that they would snatch his Heaven away. So, Indra sent the Apsaras, the season of spring, and the mellow Southern breeze. Music and dance prevailed all round Nara-Narayana, but failed to arouse them in any way. They watched everything with supreme indifference.

Now, the Apsaras, and others, sent by Indra became very nervous, incase these Ascetics placed a curse on them. Nara-Narayana, however, told them, “Don’t be afraid.” He showed them a number of lovely women created by His Maya. Of these, they took Urvashi back with them, to make her an ornament of Heaven. Urvashi, therefore, is not an Apsara born of any action. She did not arise out of the churned ocean. She is a Narayani – created by Narayana. This is why the lineages which continue through her are lineages

of the Lord. Her relationship with Pururva also had the purpose of facilitating the Lord's Avatar.

The Yogishwara Drumil described many of the Lord's Avatars in the same way. You can read about them in the Shrimad Bhagwat.

Raja Nimi's next question was, "What is the fate of those whose desires are not stilled, whose sense organs are uncontrolled, and who do not worship the Lord?"

Answering this, the eighth Yogishwara, Chamas, said, "You see, Raja, it is a great wrong-doing, on the part of human beings, when they neglect to do bhajan or neglect to cultivate devotion for the Lord. All those in this world – like the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, Shudras; and the Brahmacharis, Grihastas, Vanaprasthas and Sanyasis - have been created from the very being of the Lord. The Parameshwara is the Father, and the Mother of the Creation. He is the Master and He is the Atma – आत्मप्रभवम्, ईश्वरम् 'aatmaprabhavam', 'eeshvaram'. Hence, the one who does not serve his parents or Master, and does nothing for the benefit of his soul, becomes a great sinner.

The person whose desires are not stilled, and who has no self-control, invariably gets trapped in the worship of his little ego, and self-satisfying activities. He forgets the essence of his parentage, Master, and Atma. His tendencies incline towards violence, sex and gambling, and these cause his downfall. One should, therefore, be watchful and worship the Lord. To worship the Lord one must have the requisite Knowledge about Him."

Then, Raja Nimi asked, "At what time, and in what form, should we worship the Lord?" The ninth Yogishwara, Karabhaajana, gave the answer.

"Raja, Satyayuga-Treta-Dvapara-Kaliyuga, are the four Yugas in which the Lord comes as different Avatars. In the Kaliyuga, people chant and sing the name, qualities and Leelas of the Lord."

Now see, amongst the shlokas of the stutis in the Shrimad Bhagwat, one stuti describes the glory of Shri Ramachandra.

त्यक्त्वा सुदुस्त्यजसुरेप्सितराज्यलक्ष्मीं

धर्मिष्ठ आर्यवचसा यदगादरण्यम्।

मायामृगं दयितयेप्सितमन्वधावद्

वन्दे महापुरुष ते चरणारविन्दम्॥ ११.५.३४.

*Tyaktvaa sudustyajasure`psitaraajaylakshmeem*

*Dharmishtha aaryavachasaa yadagaadaranyam,*

*Mayaamrigam dayitaye`psitamanvadhaavad*

*Vande`mahaapuroosha te`charanaaravindam.*

11. 5. 34.

This means, “The Lord Shri Ramachandra sacrificed the wealth of the Kingdom, which was ever sought by the Devtas. He had such filial devotion that – at the command of His father – His lotus feet wandered in the forests. His love for His wife was such that to please her, He chased the magic deer, knowing fully well that it was not a real deer. This is the Lord Ramachandra, at whose feet we surrender.”

It is on the basis of this shloka that the people of Ayodhya say, “Even your Kaarshni Bhagwat\*, your Vasudev Bhagwat says that one should worship Rama in the Kaliyuga.” Karabhaajanji also said, “Kaliyuga is superior to other Yugas, because in this Yuga, there is no need for Gnan, dhyan\*, upasana\*, and Yagya. Within this eon of Time, you can obtain everything by simply singing the name of the Lord.”

कलिं सभाजयन्त्यार्या गुणाज्ञाः सारभागिनः ।

यत्र सङ्कीर्तनेनैव सर्वः स्वार्थोऽभिलभ्यते ॥ ११.५.३६.

*Kalim sabhaajayantyaaryaa gunagyaah saarabhaaginah,  
Yatra sankeertane`naiva sarvah svaarthobhilabhyate`.*

11. 5. 36.

Thus, when Naradji completed narrating the episode of the Nava Yogishwaras, Devki-Vasudev were wonder-struck, by listening to this description of tattvagnan. Their were freed from delusion –

एतच्छ्रुत्वा महाभागो वसुदेवोऽतिविस्मितः ।

देवकी च महाभागा जहतुमोहमात्मनः ॥ ११.५.५१.

*E`tacchrutvaa mahaabhaago vasude`votivismitah,  
De`vakee cha mahaabhaagaa jahatumohamaatmanah.*

11. 5. 51.

After this comes the incident of Brahma and other Devtas, coming to the Lord. “Lord”, they prayed, “the purpose of our prayers to You, is now accomplished. If You feel that it is appropriate, please return to Your land.”

The Devtas flew away immediately after saying this. They were afraid that the Yaduvanshis – who had become extremely brash – would catch them.

Uddhavji had come to know that the Lord Shri Krishna had got the Mahatmas to place a curse on His lineage, and He also meant to leave. So, Uddhavji came to the Lord, and said, “I cannot live for a single moment without You, so please take me with You.” The Lord, however, had decided that Uddhavji should remain on earth, and continue to spread His gnan. “The

tradition of My gnan should continue,” He thought. So, Uddhavji’s desire was changed instantly by the Lord’s inspiration, and he said – “I wear Your discarded garments, I eat Your leftovers, I sleep and wake, get up and sit down, with You. Then, how will I be able to live without You?”

The Lord explained to Uddhavji, “Your conclusion is correct. I have decided to leave. You, however, should be detached, and concentrate on Me, and do My bhajan –

त्वं तु सर्वं परित्यज्य स्नेहं स्वजनबन्धुषु।

मय्यावेश्य मनः सम्यक् समदृग् विचरस्व गाम्॥ ११.७.६.

*Tvam tu sarva parityajya sne`ham svajanabandhushu,  
Maiyyaave`shya manah samyak samadrig vicharasva gaam.*

11. 7. 6.

See, Uddhav, this whole world is a play of the mind. When a person’s mind is restless, he sees diversity, and when it is at rest, he no longer sees the multitude. So, everything is mental. It is Maya, and it is transient. One should not get trapped in this revolving wheel.

Uddhav, the person who is beyond faults and good qualities is a liberated Mahapurush, and a jeevanmukta. A Mahapurush never gets trapped in the Sansara. His behavior is childlike. He does not accept people because of their good qualities, and nor does he reject them thinking that they are bad. All his actions are as simple as a child’s.”

Uddhavji said, “Lord, what You have told me is extremely difficult. So, please explain all these things, in a simple manner, so that I can understand easily, and put in my efforts accordingly.”

The Lord Shri Krishna spoke of how Dattatreya met Yadu, and said, “Raja Yadu saw a hefty Mahatma lying at the foot of a mountain, supremely unconcerned with the world. Yadu said, ‘Sir, the whole world burns with various problems, and you are such that it is as though you were living in the cool waters of the Gangaji. Tell me, what is the source of the deep joy within you? You have no luxurious indulgences – then, how can you be so happy?”

The Mahatma said, “Yadu, you know everything. When Brahmaji started to create, he was not fully satisfied with any of the forms he made. It was only when he created the human form, that he felt happy. The Lord is very fond of the human form, because it is very close to His own form. In the human form, it is the intellect which dominates. Only human beings are subject to paapa and punya – animals and birds neither sin, nor gain merit. This is because only humans have been given hands and brains and facilities for

obtaining pleasures. When the jeeva enters a human body, then the essence of the Atma manifests before him. This is why it is essential that a human being should use his intelligence, and through the logic of anvay\*-vyatirek\*, become aware of his true essence.

Rajan\*, I take the shelter of twenty four Gurus, through my intellect. I roam, with total freedom, in this world, because of the lessons I have learnt from them. My twenty four Gurus are – the earth, wind, sky, water, fire, the moon, the sun, a pigeon, a python, the sea, a butterfly, a wasp or bee, an elephant, a honey-collector, a deer, a fish, the prostitute Pingla, an osprey, a child, an unwed maiden, an arrow maker, a snake, a spider, and the bhringee\*.

From the earth, I learnt how to forgive. From the wind, I learnt how to remain unattached, and the sky taught me to be al-pervading. From water I learnt how to satisfy, and from the fire I learnt how to burn everything. The blacksmith was so engrossed in the arrow he was making, that he did not notice that the King's procession was passing by. When the bangles of the unwed maiden clinked, she began to break them one by one, until she had just one bangle on each hand, and no more clinking sounds. Whenever many people stay together, there is always some friction. I saw the pigeon die, due to his attachment to his family. I also saw how an elephant gets trapped by touch, a fish is trapped by food, and honey gathered by bees is stolen by the honey-collector. In the same way, I learnt from the rest of the Gurus.”

Dattatreyaaji Maharaj shows us – by describing these twenty four Gurus – how a man who is alert can learn valuable lessons from everything he sees. So, an intelligent person should develop his insight enough to be able to learn lessons wherever he goes and whatever he sees.

Dattatreyaaji told Yadu that this body is the cause for detachment and disinterest. Prajapati created it for the purpose of seeing the Paramatma, but it gets trapped in the world. However, if a person wants to, he can liberate himself.

See, on the one hand is a righteous King like Yadu, and on the other hand is a Mahatma like Dattatreya. Yadu is Shri Krishna's ancestor, and Dattatreya is a direct Avatar of the Lord Vishnu. Both are of a high caliber. This is why their dialogue gifted tattvagnan to the world.

After this, Shri Krishna told Uddhavji, “You see, there should be a purpose in the Dharma you practice. The Dharma of the Yagyas, etc., lays emphasis on the doer. The karta\* must have the eligibility, and the karma must adhere fully to the stipulations and specifications. If the stipulations are fulfilled perfectly, then an apoorva\* is created, which is retained in the antahkaran of

the person who undertakes the Yagya, and gives its fruit at the appropriate time.

The Bhagwat-Dharma, however, does not depend upon the doer – it depends predominantly upon the purpose with which the work is done. Which Paramatma do you wish to worship through your actions – कस्मै दैवाय हविषा विधेम ‘*kasmai daivaaya havishavidhe`ma`*’?

Who do you cook for? For feeding the people who are the forms of the Lord, in His creation. For whom do you grow food? For the Lord, who is in every form. For whom do you make clothes? For Him, who is in all. Who do you purify iron for? For everybody’s convenience, because it is the Lord who abides in all the forms.

The uniqueness of the Bhagwat-Dharma is that, according to this, the Lord is in all forms. And our actions are for serving all. Whatever you do, offer it all in the service of the Lord who is in all. Shridhar Swami has said that any work done for the Lord becomes Dharma. But, in the section of the ritualistic Karma-kand\* of the scriptures, however, only ritualistic worship is considered Dharma. There is an immense difference between the Bhagwat Dharma and the Karma-kand Dharma.”

The Lord said, further, “Uddhav, one should understand the secret of this world, and then think about the Atmatattva\*, because it is only by the Knowledge of the Atma that a person can be freed from the world. Just as fire is inherent in wood, even before it flares up by the friction of rubbing two dry pieces of wood vigorously, in the same way, the Atma and Paramatma are hidden in the body. When one uses discrimination to bring it forth, then the Chetan separates itself from the body – just like juice squeezed out of sugar cane. This has three steps. One is, ‘I am not the gross-subtle-individual body. I am the Atma, which is separate from this body. I am unattached to this body, and I am the witness of it.’ The second is, ‘The unattached witness – the Atma – is not separate. It is one with the Parabrahm Paramatma, and one with everything. The Brahman is the sub-stratum of the illusionary common denomination (of individual creatures).’

The third step is, ‘Nothing exists, except the Paramatma.’ By pondering deeply upon these three points, a person’s ignorance about the Atma is dispelled. The purpose of tattvagnan is to dispel ignorance.

बद्धो मुक्त इति व्याख्या गुणतो मे न वस्तुतः।

गुणस्य मायामूलत्वात् न मे मोक्षो न बन्धनम्॥ ११.११.१.

*Baddho mukta iti vyaakhyaa gunato me`na vastutah,*

*Gunasya maayaamoolatvaanna me`moksho na bandhanam.*

11. 11. 1

In the Atma, there is neither bondage nor liberation. The impression of bondage is created by the sattvaguna-rajoguna-tamoguna, and so is the illusion of liberation. There is no bondage-liberation in Atmagnan. The person who dwells within his body, and considers himself to be the karta-bhokta\* is bound; and the one who knows himself to be separate from his sense organs, and is aware of his status as a mere witness, has no bondage whatsoever. Both of these are not two – they are one and the same. During the period of illusion, it is called the jeeva, and when it is enlightened, it is called the Brahman. There is, however, no change of any kind in its intrinsic essence.”

The Lord continued, “You see, brother Uddhav, if you desire to possess Me, then listen –

न रोधयति मां योगो न सांख्य धर्म एव च ।

न स्वाध्यायस्तपस्तत्यागो नेष्टापूर्त न दक्षिणा ॥ ११.१२.१.

*Na rodhayati maam yogo na saankhaya dharma e`va cha,*

*Na svaadhyayastapastyaago ne`shtaapoorta na dakshinaa.*

11. 12. 1.

I can never be controlled by Yoga-bhoga\*, Sankhya, Dharma, Svaadhyay\*, tapa, tyaga\*, and dakshinaa\*. None of these can win Me over.

यथावरुन्धे सत्सङ्गः सर्वसङ्गपहो हि माम् ॥ ११.१२.२.

*Yathaavarundhe`satsangah sarvasangapaho hi maam.*

11. 12. 2.

The one thing which can win Me, is Satsang, which results in abandoning all the worldly attachments undertaken after worldly attachments. It was due to Satsang, that the vulture, hunter, Ajamil, and Kubja obtained spiritual benefits. So, one should always have Satsang. Apart from Bhakti, obtained through Satsang, there is no other method for man’s ultimate benefit. When a person endeavors – through Satsang – the result is that Bhakti enters his heart, and he is benefited.”

After this, the Bhagwat gives a unique episode, which is generally not found elsewhere. The Sanakadis went to Brahmaji one day. The Sanakadis are born enlightened. No Guru gave them Knowledge. Just as Vamdev attained enlightenment while still in the womb, the Sanakadis, too, were already enlightened when they were born. Actually, even the Virat Chaitanya\* does not need a Guru; the Hiranyagarbha Chaitanya does not need a Guru, and the

Ishwara Chaitanya needs no Guru, either. The only one who needs a Guru is the ordinary jeeva.

So, the Sanakadis placed this question before Brahmaji, “Father,” they said, “Our mental condition has taken on the form of sense objects, because our mind focused on these objects. All the external sense objects we see, are seen because of the mental impressions which are the result of eons of tendencies. Sense objects are in the mind, and the mind is filled with sense objects. When we sit down and try to separate the mind from the objects, then neither do the objects leave the mind, and nor does the mind leave the objects. We tried to meditate till we were exhausted. Please tell us the secret of these two. How can they be separated?”

At the time when the Sanakadis placed this question, Brahmaji was occupied with thoughts of which part of a jeeva’s accumulated past actions should be used in the molding of his body. Since Brahmaji’s intellect was occupied on this question, he was unable to provide the answer to Sanakadi’s question. Then what happened?

स मामचिन्तयद् देवः प्रश्नपारतितीर्षया ।

तस्याहं हंसरूपेण सकाशमगमं तदा ।। ११.१३.१९.

*Sa maamachintayad de`vah prashnapaaratiteershayaa,  
Tasyaaham hansaroope`nah sakaashamagamam tadaa.  
11. 13. 19.*

The Lord Shri Krishna said, “Uddhav, since Brahmaji found himself unable to answer the question placed by the Sanakadis, he began to think of Me. I took on the Hansavatara\* and appeared before him. Everybody was amazed to see Me. Brahmaji came to Me, bringing his sons, the Sanakadis, and said, ‘Ko bhavaan?’ (Who are you?)”

Now, it should strike you, that the Hansa\* is the Devta of vivek\*. The specialty of a swan is its ability to separate water from milk. A swan is white – sattvik. True discrimination exists only in the satviktaa\*. The vivek of a rajoguni is murky, because of the latent desires. A person with tamoguna lacks discrimination altogether; he is blind. So the Lord manifested as the white swan, which was a personification of discrimination.

The Lord said, “When Brahma, and the Sanakadis asked, I answered by saying – ‘Does your question refer to the Atma or to the body? All bodies are made of the five elements, like earth, etc. And they are experienced by sense organs, as sound, feel, appearance, flavor, and fragrance. So, the bodies of all are the same – what is there to question in that? If you wish to know what the Atma is, and who I am – then, the Atma of all, from an ant to



the Hirangyagarbha, to the Ishwara – is one. There is no differentiation, in the Atma, of a blade of grass, or Nature.

So, neither can you ask about the Atma, because That – which is your Atma – is also My Atma. Nor can you ask about the body, because your bodies and Mine, are all made of the same panchabhootas. Actually, all are the same. So, why do you ask this meaningless question - ‘Who are you?’

पंचात्मकेषु भूतेषु समानेषु च वस्तुतः ।

को भवानिति वः प्रश्नो वाचारम्भो ह्यनर्थकः ॥ ११.१३.२३.

*Panchaatmake`shu bhoote`shu samaane`shu cha vastutah,*

*Ko bhavaaniti vah prashno vaachrambho hyanarthakah.*

11. 13. 23.

Even so, if you are determined to get an answer to your question, then it is this: whatever is spoken by the tongue, whatever is heard by the ears, and whatever is seen by the eyes – it is all ‘I’, alone. Nothing exists, apart from Me.

मनसा वचसा दृष्ट्या गृह्यतेऽन्यैरपिन्द्रियैः ।

अहमेव न मत्तोऽन्यदिति बुध्यध्वमंजसा ॥ ११.१३.२४.

*Manasaa vachasaa drishtyaa grihyate`nyairapeendriyaih,*

*Ahame`va na mattonyaditi budhyadhvamanjasaa.*

11. 13. 24.

The fact is that by focusing through the different sense organs, upon different subjects, you have attached your Self to these objects. You forget that it is the mind, which is the object of the senses, and the sense object is nothing but the mind. The mind can never be separated from the object. The only way to separate them is to leave both – मद्रूप उभयं त्यजेत् ‘*madroopa ubhayam tyaje`t`*. You should merge your Atma into the Paramatma. Don’t merge your Atma into the sense objects. Your sense objects are transient, inanimate, and exterior. The Atma is the conscious, the Chetan. So, let the Chetan be dissolved into the Chetan, become one with Me, and then discard all the objects of your senses from your Self. When you have done this, the question of separating your mind from its object will remain no more. The moment you recognize your Self as Me, everything will become My essence.

Do not waste your spiritual effort in trying to separate objects from your mind. Instead, try to separate your Self from the objects and also the mind, and establish your Self in My essence – which is the Brahman.”

The Lord Shri Krishna said, “Uddav, after removing the doubts of the Sanakadis in this way, I vanished before their eyes. The fact is that the devotion for Me is the highest Sadhana. Bhakti has two attributes. One is that it purifies the antahkaran of the person who has it, and improved his life. The second is that it gives information about the object of devotion. So, there is no other way, better than Bhakti, to purify one’s life.”

Now, see – here lies the incomparable quality of the Shrimad Bhagwat. The tattvagnan in it is the same as in the Upanishads, the Brahmasutras and the Gita. The uniqueness of this is that – through Bhakti – it purifies our antahkaran from the standpoint of the Tvam padartha\* and also provides the clarity of our own Self. Hence, the Bhakti presented by the Shrimad Bhagwat is useful for the jeeva. It links the jeeva to the Ishwara.

When Uddhavji asked about the way to meditate, the Lord Shri Krishna said,

सम आसन आसीनः समकायो यथासुखम्। ११.१४.३२.

*Sama aasana aaseena samakaayo yathaasukham.*

11. 14. 32.

“Uddhav, a person should be comfortably seated on an asana\*, when he meditates. The ground should be even. The asana will not be firm if the base is uneven. The asana which has been spread out, should also be even. One should not sit in a bending posture, with a drooping head, or with the head turned up. One should be absolutely erect, and chant the Omkara\*. This ensures alertness, and helps to avoid lethargy and drowsiness.”

I have seen many people, whose heads loll, when they sit for mediation. Their breathing deepens. They say – we meditated for so long – but, what kind of meditation would they be doing? Breathing deeply is a sign of slumber, and the lolling head is a sign of drowsiness and a lack of alertness. Another name for Sadhana is vigilance. What spiritual effort can you do, if you become unwatchful? Knowledge disappears when one is unwatchful.

So, one who wants to meditate successfully, should sit erect on an even asana, and concentrate on the image, that there is a lotus in the heart, with its head turned downwards. The head of the lotus should gradually be turned upwards through concentration, and its petals to be opened. The lotus bud should bloom. This is an eight petalled lotus. The eight petals symbolize the eight-fold Prakriti. In the center is the soft cushion of pollen. The nectar of the flower seeps out from the fragrant pollen particles. Meditate that the Lord is seated upon the soft, fragrant cushion of the lotus. One should not picture the Lord as an inanimate statue, either lying down, or standing. We should meditate upon a conscious Lord, looking lovingly at us, smiling

tenderly, and holding out His arms to embrace us. His heart is filled with an eager desire to benefit us.

Many people tell me that they try to meditate, but are unable to do so. What is the reason? The reason is that the mind of the person is engrossed elsewhere. The Yoga Darshan\* gives clear directions that when you sit for meditation, you should tell yourself firmly – ‘O Sansara, O relatives, O body, you remain on earth. I am going to the Lord. If the Lord tells me to go to Vaikunth with Him, or to immerse myself in Him, or merge with Him, then I will not return to you. I am giving up everything which belongs to this world. I am abandoning everything which seems to be separate from the Lord. I sit down, to meet my Lord.’

As soon as you take this firm decision, you will see that your body becomes unmoving, your mind becomes focused, and you will be seated within the Lord. At present your condition is divided. You have tied a rope round your waist, which tugs you this way and that way. The Yoga Darshan calls it the प्रयत्न-शैथिल्य ‘*prayatna shaithilya*\*’.

So, make your efforts more determined. You can meditate that before you is the hood of the Sheshnag, and you are mentally one with him. The Lord is asleep on your lap, and the hood of the Sheshnag is over your head. The Sheshnag is absolutely unmoving. If he moved, the earth would be rocked. You will see how well you can meditate, in this manner.

What happens when a person meditates like this? संयास्यत्याशु निर्वाणं द्रव्यज्ञानक्रियाभ्रमः ‘*Sanyaasyatyaashu nirvaanam dravyagnaanakriyaabhramah*’, which means that the illusion – that there are, in this world, other things and actions, apart from the Lord – is dispelled. If you can meditate properly for even two minutes, all your love for worldly objects will vanish completely. The world is experienced only when the mind is restless. When the mind is focused, one is unaware of the world.

After this, the Lord Shri Krishna said, “Uddhav, when a person starts thinking of Me repeatedly, and meditate upon Me, then many kinds of Siddhis enter into his life. He can become light, heavy, spread himself, and obtain objects of desire. He can even control others. There are eight main Siddhis, and eighteen less important ones. Although these come, the Satpurush say that accepting them is an obstacle to attaining Me.

The Sansara calls them Siddhis, but those who walk towards Me, consider them to be paltry. It is certain that there is no Siddhi, which is unattainable by the one who remembers Me, or does My Bhajan. However, all the Siddhis are an obstacle on the path to Me, i.e. for the purification of the

antahkaran, and the obtaining of tattvagnan – अनतरायान् वदन्त्येता *antaraayaan vadantye`taa`*! That is why the Mahatmas never accept them.”

Shri Krishna then described His Vibhutis\* for Uddhav, just as He has done for Arjuna in the Gita. One is the naisargic\* form and the other is the Vibhuti! One is His Vibhuti and the other is His Yoga. You read in the Gita, that the earth is the Lord’s Yoga –

एतां विभूतिं योगं च मां यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।

सोऽविकम्पेन योगेन युज्यते नात्र संशयः ॥ १०.७.

*E`tam vibhootim yogam cha maam yo ve`tti tattvatah,  
Soavikampe`na yoge`na yujyate` naatra sanshayah.*

10. 7

The lotus which blooms, the grains of food which grow, and the fragrance which spreads, are all the vaibhav\* of the Earth. Water is the Lord’s Yoga. The Lord is one, but the multitude of flavors are the Vibhutis of water. Fire is the Lord’s Yoga, but the exquisite beauty seen in it, are the Vibhutis of fire. Thus, all the objects in the world have the Lord’s Yoga and the Vibhutis in them. All the factors in the universe we see are the Yoga of the Lord, and the variety in them, is their glory. When a person begins to recognize the essence and wealth of the Lord, then he automatically establishes himself gradually in the Lord. The wealth he sees will be the Lord’s wealth, and the essence he sees will be the Lord’s essence. This way, he will see the Lord everywhere, and in everything.

Then Uddhavji heard, from the lips of the Lord, descriptions about the Varnashrama Dharma\*, Yama-niyama\*, and Bhakti-Gnan-Karmayoga\*. After listening to these, he asked a question about the number of tattvas that exist. He also placed some questions about the Sankhya philosophy. Both these are separate questions. Regarding the tattva, Uddhavji asked, “Lord, some Mahatmas say that there is only one essence, one element, one substance. Some say there are two, some again say three. Some, however, say four and some say five. Some say there are seventeen, and others say there are twenty eight tattvas. Some place the number at thirty six. Please tell me how many there really are.”

The Lord explained the reason for these contradictory statements, saying, “Uddhav, don’t consider the people who decide upon the tattvas to be fools. Don’t have doubts as to which is correct, and which is not. There are different methods for evaluating these things. According to them, one merges into another and the second merges into the third. From one viewpoint they are two, and from another, it is one. The Mahatmas have all

experienced the tattvas, and explained them by different methods. Say, for instance, that there is one Paramatma, and the other is Prakriti. Prakriti has three gunas. They have many permutations and modifications. Considering these factors, some calculate them as one tattva, some as two, and some as three.

सर्वन्याय्यं युक्तिमत्त्वाद् विदुषां किमशोभनम्।

*Sarvanyaayyam yuktimattvaad vidushaam kimashobhanam*

The viewpoints of the various learned men are rational from the relative stand point. Therefore, how can any viewpoint be regarded as unworthy?”

Once, Shri Udiyababaji Maharaj asked me, “What is the sandhi\* between the drashta\* and the drishya\*?”

I replied, “Drishti\*. One is the viewer; the other is the viewed, so the connecting link has to be the vision.”

Baba said, “Wrong.”

I asked, “Then what is right, Maharaj?”

Baba said, “The ignorance of the essence of the one who views. If you understood the tattva from the angle of the oneness of Space and Time, then you would know that it is not the vision, but it is the ignorance of the essence of the viewer, which makes the viewed appear to be separate.” So, everything stated by learned people is authentic, and has been stated due to certain reasoning. There is no need to argue and contradict. Any of the paths shown by a Mahatma can help you to attain the Lord.

Uddhavji asked the Lord, “What is Sankhya?”

“Sankhya is the count of the tattvas,” replied Shri Krishna. “Come, let us do the counting. One is the karya. Start the counting from this point. The final karya are the panchabhootas. Some scientists claim that there are only four panchabhootas, some believe there are three, and some believe that there is only one Shakti. These opinions, however, are based on experiments done through instruments. We have five natural instruments: the ears to hear with, the skin to feel with, the eyes to see with, the tongue to taste with, and the nose to smell with. These five instruments are fitted into our bodies, and show us objects separately. Now, the basic elements absorbed by our five sense organs are: one, sound and the root of the ears; two, touch and the root of the skin; three, appearances and the root of the eyes; four, flavor and the root of the tongue; five, fragrance and the root of the nose. In the same way, the elements should also be five. These five basic elements – space (ether), wind, fire, water, and earth – should have their five basic tanmatras\*. The shabda\* tanmatra, the sparsha\* tanmatra, the roop\* tanmatra, the rasa\*

tanmatra, and the gandha\* tanmatra. All the forms and appearances in the world – whether they are of a tree, shrub, animals and birds, human beings, bad people and Mahatmas, the stars and constellations – all are made of the panchabhootas. Of these, millions of universes are formed. The panchabhootas are greater. And, in comparison, the universes are like little eggs.

All forms, all names and all species are imagined within the panchabhootas. Hence, the final karya is the panchabhoota. The five tanmatras, ahankara\* and mahattattva\*, which come in between, appear to be the action, when viewed by their cause; and when viewed by the action, appear to be the cause. So, one element becomes the action and the other element becomes both the action and the cause.

There is one element which remains only the cause – it never becomes an action. For example, Prakriti is never the action – it is always the cause of everything. However, the elements are three – the cause element, the action element, and the action-cause element. The fourth object is the unattached witness, the conscious Atma, which illumines these elements. By using the calculation of Sankhya – about how Prakriti gives birth to Creation, and how Creation merges into Prakriti – our attachment to worldly objects is removed. This kind of meditation serves to destroy all attachments. It is this, which is called the ‘anvay - vyatirek’(concomitance-variation) line of thought. Prakriti, being the cause, persists in all the effects which are evolved from it, and they finally merge into it. However, Prakriti may also exist by itself, without any of its manifested effects.”

Before this, the Lord Shri Krishna had answered Uddhavaji’s questions regarding the Varnashrama Dharmas. “In My Paramatma form,” explained the Lord Shri Krishna, “are the four Varnas and the four Ashrams. Knowledge about this world is obtained mainly through the ears, eyes, skin, nose and tongue. Hence, the castes which are created from My face, My head, are the Gnan-pradhan\* castes, and are called Brahmins. In the same way, the castes born of My strong arms are called the Kshatriyas – whose arms are strong and who protect.”

This definition can be viewed in another way. The Virat Purusha\*’s form – called Vaishvanara\*, is the state of being awake. In it, are the Brahmachari and the Shudra. Higher than this is the Taijas Hiranyagarbha\*, whose decision creates the world. This form contains the Vaishyas and the Grihasthas, who are predominantly good planners, organizers and decision makers. Above them are the Kshatriyas and the Vanaprasthas, who are ultimately immersed in the essence of the Pragya\* form of the Lord, and the Ishwara. They have position and power, as well as a highly developed

intellect. Moreover, they are predominantly destroyers. Everything gets destroyed in them. Above this is the Turiya essence. The Turiya essence is predominated by Gnan – it is Knowledge itself. The Brahmins and Monks, therefore, are imagined within this essence, Turiya. And, as mentioned earlier, the Kshatriya-Vanaprasthas are imagined in the Ishwara and Pragya form. The Vaishyas-Grihasthas are imagined in the Taijas and Hiranyagarbha predominated forms. The Shudras-Brahmacharis are imagined in the predominantly Virat and Vaishwanara forms, to serve.

All of them are the essence of the Paramatma.

Now, if someone were to say, “Cut off the legs and let only the head remain,” the man will become lame. If the legs were to be left, and the hands to be cut off, he would become useless. And if the head was cut off, there would be no life in the body.

“The four Varnas (Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra), and the four Ashramas (Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanaprastha, and Sanyasi) are imagined in the Lord’s quadruple form of Virat-Vishwanara, Hiranyagarbha-Taijas, Ishwara-Pragya, and Turiya-Brahmatattva. The dominating tendencies are: Knowledge for the Brahmins, strength for the Kshatriyas, planning for the Vaishyas, and work for the Shudras. Their Dharmas are dictated in keeping with the tendencies of each group in mind. There is, therefore, the Brahmin Dharma, the Kshatriya Dharma, the Vaishya Dharma, and the Shudra Dharma – but of these, none are smaller or greater. All four are parts of the body, and each has equal usefulness. It is not proper to say, “We don’t want this part.” Of what use our body be, without the organs of evacuation? So, all these parts belong to the body of the Paramatma, and they have been divided according to their innate tendencies, places of birth, and the original source from which they have emerged.”

The Lord Shri Krishna then spoke of the qualities a Brahmin should possess, including shama-dama\*; the qualities a Kshatriya should have, including strength and courage; the wealth and luxury, keeping cows and trading skills a Vaishya should have, etc. Just as groups are made in accordance to people’s aptitudes, these are divisions made by the Lord, in keeping with the natural tendencies. So, everybody should follow the dictates of his Dharma.

The method described in the Shrimad Bhagwat, of how one’s Dharma should be followed, is unique. It says, “Do all your work, but be watchful as to the motive behind it. Do everything for the sake of serving the Parameshwara, who abides in all forms; the Virat, Hiranyagarbha, Ishwara, the Parameshwara who is the Turiya. Adhere to your pure Dharma – with no selfish desires – by serving the Parameshwara. Don’t adhere to your Dharma

for selfish motives or personal pleasures. Everybody should worship the Lord by following his Dharma as per his status in life.

The Chaitanya in the Jeevatma is not separate from the Ishwara at all. So, a person who seeks the Lord with devotion, keeps to the tenets of his Dharma, and carries out his duties as a service to the Lord who is everybody's Atma, the Universal Atma, gets the supreme benefits. The Lord is in all forms, so even the trees and shrubs should be looked after, Service should be given even to animals and birds. The human beings and Devtas should also be served. One should serve water, not make it impure. The earth should be served – it should not be dirtied. Unclean objects should not be mixed in the rays of the sun and the moon. Even the wind should be kept pure. The sky should also be kept clean and pure. If you utter pure words, they will spread in the sky and purify it. Thus, the Bhagwat-Dharma, meditating upon the Lord, is for the purpose of purifying the individual as well as the whole. It gives the highest benefits. Those who fail to adhere to it get enmeshed in the world. Their path after death is quite different.

There is a passage in the Bhagwat, where the question is raised that when everything is the form of the Paramatma, what is the logic of seeing good and bad qualities? The answer is that until the mind gives up its habit of viewing good and bad qualities, one should continue to follow the rules of Yama-niyama\*. Yama means satya\*, ahimsa\*, brahmacharya\*, asteya\*, and aparigraha\*. The Yoga Darshan describes these five. The Bhagwat, however, describes twelve Yamas – ahimsa, satya, asteya, asangata\*, lajja\*, asanchay\*, asatikta\*, brahmacharya, maun\*, sthirtaa\*, kshama\*, and abhay\*. In the same way, twelve niyamas are given – shauch\*, japa, tapa, havan, shraddha, atithi seva\*, puja, teerthayatra\*, paropakara\*, santosh\*, and Guru seva\*. We should have Yama in our interaction with people, and practice niyama for personal purification. Asanas are for good health, and pranayama\* is for controlling actions. Pratyahara\* is for controlling the senses. Dharna\* is for keeping only one object in mind, and Dhyan is for controlling the mind for a period of time. Samadhi is for immersing ourselves in a particular object. When our mind falls into utter darkness, tamoguna, it is called 'naraka'\*. When sattvaguna rises in our life, that is the coming of Heaven – स्वर्ग सत्त्वगुणोदयः 'svarga sattvaguno dayah.'

In the Shrimad Bhagwat it is said that there is no need to go into lengthy descriptions about all these. So long as a person has the perception of good and bad qualities, and so long as the perceptions are not fully immersed into the Paramatma, you can take it that the fault of Maya lingers in them –

गुणदोषदृशिर्दोषो गुणस्तूभयवर्जितः । ११.१९.४५.



सुनहु तात मायाकृत गुण अरु दोष अनेक।  
गुण यह उभय न देखिये, देखिये सो अविवेक।।

*Gunadoshadrishirdosho gunastoobhayavarjitah.*  
11. 19. 45.

*Sunahu taata maayaakrita guna aru dosha ane`ka,*  
*Guna yaha ubhaya na de`khiye`, de`khiya so avive`k.*

Our attention should be shifted, from seeing good qualities and faults in others. However, if we wish to develop good qualities in our own lives, we have to put in an effort. Just see – what is the subject of your study? Do you read sattvik books, or do you read rajasik-tamasik books? Which type of water do you imbue? Do you drink pure water or do you drink bottled water? What kind of people do you stay with? Which place do you stay in? Where were you born? What work do you do? What do you eat? Which mantra do you chant? What kind of sanskaras do you have?

Through such introspection you can develop good qualities and actions in your life. Sattvaguna is increased by keeping the company of sattvik people, and their worship. He alone is considered sattvik whose possession of sattva is according to the scriptures and in keeping with the opinion of learned, elderly people. The one, who is made sattvik by a desire to work to appear sattvik, is not really sattvik.

At this point, Uddhavji placed the question, “When there is only one basic essence, why have the rules of dos and don’ts been prescribed? Neither the rule, nor its exception, can be made without the perceptions of good and bad. Lord, You have preached to me that a good lifestyle comes from the viewpoint of goodness; and one gives up whatever is wrong by the knowledge of what is wrong for us. This has raised a doubt in my mind. Please Grace me by removing the doubt.”

Now, tomorrow you will get the reply about Uddhavji’s doubt, that even though there is only one Brahman, and only one Maya, and only one Prakriti, and only the common Panchabhoota; and even though the Jeevatma is Chetan, why have the divisions of good and bad been made? Only tomorrow will you be told of the Bhikshu-Gita, and the Paramartha propounded by Shri Shukadevji Maharaj, and also his beautiful sermon upon the Bhagwat Dharma. This lecture-Yagya has, somehow, to be completed tomorrow.

Om Shantih Shantih Shantih

## BHAGAWATAMRIT

### Pravarchan XIV

#### (Skandha XI & XII)

Yesterday we were discussing the question placed by Uddhavji. He asked Shri Krishna, “I find myself unable to swallow what You told me, about it being wrong to see the good and the bad tendencies in people; and that it is the highest of good qualities to not see these tendencies. The directions are given in the Vedas – do this, don’t do this; this is good, this is bad; this is paapa and this is punya; and this gives Hell and this gives Heaven. However without separating the good from the bad tendencies, these statements do not tally, it all becomes illogical. So, how can this statement of Yours be of the highest benefit for people – निःश्रेयसं कथं ह्येनं निषेधविधिगोचरम् ? ‘*nishre`yasam katham hye`nam nishhe`dhavidhigocharam`?*”

The first point made by the Lord Shri Krishna in His reply is, “Uddhav, the vidhi-nishedh\* you speak of, are not for separating the pleasures, objects, or actions. They apply to the Chetan\* adhikari\*. The materialists in the world use inanimate instruments to examine, observe and acknowledge the good and bad qualities of objects, saying, “this is poison” and “this is nectar”. However, it is the same venom which becomes a curative medicine for some, and thus becomes elixir; while for others, even elixir acts as deadly poison. So, the qualities of an object cannot be the deciding factor about what is worth accepting and what is worth avoiding.

धर्मार्थं व्यवहार्यं यात्रार्थं इति चानघ।

दर्शितोऽयं मयाऽऽचारो धर्ममुद्वहतां धुरम्॥ ११.२१.४.

*Dharmaartham vyavahaaraartham yaatraartham iti chaanagha,*

*Darshitoyam mayaachaaro dharmamudvahataam dhuram.*

11. 21. 4.

The Vedas spell out the imagined differences (of good and bad) with five intentions. People should lead long, healthy lives, their interaction should be pure, religious rituals should be undertaken by them, their strengths should increase, and they should be able to make positive use of their strengths. The fact is that there is nothing unequal about items.

Actually, everything is the Brahman, everything is Prakriti, everything is Maya, everything is panchabhoota\*. Through the analysis of the tattva, the

actions can result in attaining particles, or energy, or the Parameshwara, or the Brahmatmaikya bodh\*. You will never be successful in reaching the right conclusion if you try to discriminate between good and bad, through the properties of objects. That is why Yoga - while being established in non-differentiation – imagines the differences.

वेदेन नामरूपाणि विषमाणि समेष्वपि ।

धातुषूद्धव कल्प्यन्ते एतेषां स्वार्थसिद्धये ।। ११.२१.६.

*Ve`de`na naamaroopaani vishamaani same`shvapi,*

*Dhaatushooddhava kalpyante`e`te`shaam svaarthasiddhaye`.*

11. 21. 6.

Yoga imagines the different names and forms, while retaining its condition of equanimity and oneness, so that all the different items may be made useful in our lives.

This is why I stated earlier, that the person whose life contains indifference and detachment, and he has a desire to experience the Shantarasa, is suited for Gnanyoga\*. The one who has an urge to change things and who has some avid desires – a wish to obtain something – is suited for Karmayoga\*. And, the one who has neither strong detachment, nor strong attachment, is suited for Bhaktiyoga\*.

निर्विण्णानां ज्ञानयोगे न्यासिनामिह कर्मसु ।

तेष्वनिर्विण्णचित्तानां कर्मयोगस्तु कामिनाम् ।।

यदृच्छया मत्कथादौ जातश्रद्धस्तु यः पुमान् ।

न विर्विण्णो नातिसक्तो भक्तियोगोऽस्य सिद्धिदः ।। ११.२०.७-८

*Nirvinnaannaam gnaanayoge`nyaasinaamiha karmasu,*

*Te`shvarirvinnachittaanaam karmyogastu kaaminaam.*

*Yadricchayaa matkathaadau jaatashraddhastu yah pumaan,*

*Na virvinno naatisakto bhaktiyogasya siddhidah.*

11. 20. 7-8.

By external research, one can never reach the end of an object. The end of everything can be reached only by searching deep within ourselves, and knowing ourselves. As a matter of fact, the conch shell is a bone, and yet it is used to offer water to the Lord. Drums are covered with leather, but are taken into temples. An item which benefits a patient is seen to be avoided by a healthy person. A substance like ghee can be digested by a wrestler, and benefit him, but an invalid is given soup. Rich dishes like halwa-puri are not good for everybody.

The ability and expectation of a person has to be considered, to evaluate what he is fit for, and which items are suitable for him, depending upon his condition. Patented medicines are not always effective. The Vaidya\* examines the patient, and then decides which treatment is needed. Arsenic is a medicine for some, and a snake may be poisoned by the milk it is given. If there is a large lake, then everybody can bathe and gargle in it, but if there is just a little water, it becomes jootha\*. If there is a five quintal heap of flour, and a cat soils a portion, than people throw away the flour near the soiled portion, along with the cat's stool, and use the rest. However, if there is only a kilo or two of flour, and a cat soils it, it will all be thrown away. So, the stipulation of Dharma cannot be decided by considering only the item, strength, or action.

In the end, Shri Krishna declared boldly, "The Vedas are endless, they are inexhaustible, and I am the only one who knows their full purport. Nobody else, but Me, knows the full purport of the Vedas.

किं विधत्ते किमाचष्टे किमनूद्य विकल्पयेत्।

इत्यस्या हृदयं लोके नान्यो मद् वेद कश्चन।। ११.२१.४२.

*Kim vidhatte`kimaachashte`kimanoodya vikalpaye`t,*

*Ityasyaa hridayam loke`naanyo mad ve`da kaschana.*

11. 21. 42.

Nobody but I knows the ruling of the shruti. Nobody knows fully who is named in the Vedas. Nobody knows what the Vedas translate, and what they superimpose – except Me.

मां विधत्तेऽभिधत्ते मां विकल्प्यापोह्यते त्वहम्।

एतवान् सर्ववेदार्थः शब्द आस्थाय मां भिदाम्।।

मायामात्रमनूद्यान्ते प्रतिषिध्य प्रसीदति।। ११.२१.४३

*Maam vidhatte`bhidhatte` maam vikalpyaapohyate`tvaham,*

*E`tavaan sarvave`daarthah shabda aasthaaya maam bhidaam.*

*Maayaamaatramanoodyaante`pratishidhya praseedati.*

11. 21. 43.

Uddhav, I tell you unequivocally, that the Shrutis affirm only the truth of My being, and on the basis of it, they posit distinction (as between the jeevatma and Paramatma). This distinction is repudiated later. The entire approach of the Shrutis is this – they initially speak of the distinction and later affirm that the difference is entirely an illusionary projection. All the differences are

mere perception; there is no real difference in the being. After negating the differences, the Veda-shruti itself becomes silent.

See – there is no holy book in the world, belonging to any religious sect, which first described Dharma, and the Ishwara, and in the end, declares, “God is the only Truth. I am not the Truth.” The Truth of the Vedas is, thus, quite different from other religious philosophies.

After enumerating the tattvas, describing the separation of the Purusha-Prakriti\*, giving the history of the ‘titikshu Brahmin’, explaining the Sankhya Yoga, and giving the description of the good, mixed and base tendencies, the Lord narrated the episode of Puroorva. He said, “Uddhav, Puroorva lost his senses due to his infatuation with Urvashi. Later, when he undertook atmachintan\*, and developed discrimination, he said, “Oh! In spite of being a Chakravarti Samrat\*, I have been reduced to becoming a plaything of this Apsara, this prostitute. The whole world used to bow at my feet. But, I would run, naked, after her; and she harassed me so much!”

In the end, the Lord Shri Krishna said, “Uddhav, dussang is to be totally discarded, and satsang is best. No matter how much luxury, indulgence and attachment a person has, his heart will not be purified, until he gets satsang.

ततो दुस्संगमुत्सृज्य सत्सु सज्जेत बुद्धिमान्।

सन्त एतस्य च्छिन्दन्ति मनोव्यासङ्गमुक्तिभिः॥ ११.२६.२६.

*Tato dussangamutsrija satsu sajje`ta buddhimaan,*

*Santa e`tasya cchindanti manovyaasangamuktibhih.*

11. 26. 26.

The Seers, through their advice, make one understand that the self is entirely detached. Once the Self becomes entirely dissociated, it can not become conditioned by time, space, and objects. The reason is that it is consciousness which illuminates time, space, and objects. Therefore, the Atma, which is the illuminating consciousness, can not become conditioned by the entities which it illumines. The awareness dawns that the illuminating Atma – which is consciousness – is nothing but the non-dual ‘Being’, the Brahman.

सन्तो दिशन्ति चक्षूषि बहिरर्कः समुत्थितः।

देवता बान्धवाः सन्तः सन्त आत्माहमेव च॥ ११.२६.३४.

*Santo dishanti chakshooshi bahirarkah samuthitah,*

*De`vataa baandhavaah santah santa aatmaahame`va cha.*

11. 26. 34.

When the sun rises, our eyes are able to have a direct vision of all external objects, but when one sees a Saint, one develops the eligibility for seeing the things hidden within. The Sant\* is the Devta. The Sant is the brother, and the friend. The Sant is the Atma, and the Sant is the Paramatma.

The person, who is unable to understand this, should worship Me. But first, he should find out what upasana\* really is. One should learn the traditional method of doing upasana from a Teacher, and proceed accordingly. Upasana is not to be undertaken in a haphazard way, at one's whim and fancy.

Upasana is done in the Sun, in fire, water, earth, a Brahmin, a cow – so much so that even a low caste person, even the Hiranyagarbha, any worm or moth, Nature itself, can be a symbol of the worship to Me, the Paramatma. The appropriate worship of the Sun is to chant the Vedas, and to worship fire, one should do a havan.”

After this, the Lord elaborated on how to worship what, and stated that one should offer food to every guest, show respect to a learned Brahmin, and feed green grass to a cow. “Thus, consider every creature to be My form, and show it due respect,” said the Lord Shri Krishna.

In the same way, the Paramatma is worshipped in one's own Atma. Just as it is a murder to kill another, it is also a sin to commit suicide – because our Atma is the same as another's! So, the Lord described the worship of one's own Atma, and said that we should give ourselves suitable comforts – भोगैरात्मानमात्मनि ‘bhogairaatmaanamaatmani.’ Even in the Gita, it is said that one cannot worship the Lord by torturing one's own Atma.

कर्षयन्त शरीरस्थं भूतग्राममचेतसः ।

मां चैवान्तःशरीरस्थं तान्विद्धयासुरनिश्चयान् ॥ गीता. १७.६.

*Karshayantah shareerastham bhootagraamamache`tasah,*

*Maam chaivaantahshareerastham taanviddhayaasuranishchayaan.*

*Gita 17. 6.*

Somebody asked a Mahatma, “How do we know whether the Lord is pleased with us or not?”

The Mahatma replied, “If you are pleased with your indulgences, lifestyle, your activities, and your mental condition – then you can take it that God is pleased with you. God has not made any abode for Himself. Your antahkaran is His home. If your antahkaran is content, satisfied and in supreme bliss, then the Lord seated in your heart is also in supreme bliss. This is His place of contentment and fulfillment. So, give your body what it needs for its maintenance. Just as the Lord is satisfied by your offerings to

others, He can be satisfied by your giving your body what it needs. Animals, birds, humans, trees, creepers, and the earth – are all forms of the Lord. They are not inanimate, they are all Chetan. Nature is not inanimate – it is only the effect of Prakriti, which seems to be inanimate.

The Shruti has made a promise (pratigya), that by knowing one thing, everything can be known. The Shruti supports this statement by citing the example of gold, and the ornaments made of gold. If gold is understood, all ornaments made of gold are as good as understood. But this statement of the Shruti will be negated if Prakriti is accepted as being entirely different from the Paramatma. In reality, the Paramatma and Prakriti are not distinct. They are one and the same 'Being'.

The antahkaran is purified by worshipping the Lord with the conviction that there is none other than He. Then, one obtains Knowledge about Him.

Shri Udiyababaji Maharaj used to chant these two shlokas of the Bhagwat –

न स्तुवीत न निन्देत कुर्वतः साध्वसाधु वा ।  
वदतो गुणदोषाभ्यां वर्जितः समदृङ् मुनिः ॥  
न कुर्यान्न वदेत् किञ्चिन्न ध्यायेत्साध्वसाधु वा ।  
आत्मारामोऽनया वृत्त्या विचरेज्जडवन्मुनिः ॥ ११.११.१६-१७

*No stuveeta na ninde`ta kurvatah saadhvasaadhu vaa,  
Vadato gunadoshaabhyaam varjitah samadrin munih.  
Na kuryaanna vade`t kinchinna dhyaaye`t saadhvasaadhu vaa,  
Aatmaaraamonayaa vrityaa vichare`jjadavanmunih.  
11. 11. 16-17.*

In these shlokas, too, the Lord Shri Krishna has preached to Uddhavji, “Don’t think about good and bad, and don’t do good and bad. A Mahatma should move about totally absorbed in the form of His Atma, which is the Paramatma.”

परस्वभावकर्माणि न प्रशंसेन्न गर्हयेत् ।  
विश्वमेकात्मकं पश्यन् प्रकृत्या पुरुषेण च ॥  
परस्वभावकर्माणि यः प्रशंसति निन्दति ।  
स आशु भ्रश्यते स्वार्थादसत्यभिनिवेशतः ॥ ११.२८.१-२.

*Parasvabhaavakarmani na prashanse`nna garhaye`t,  
Vishvame`kaatmakam pashyan prakrityaa purushe`na cha.  
Parsvabhaavakarmani yah prashansati nindati,  
Sa aashu bhrashyate`svaarthaadasatyabhinive`shatah.  
11. 28. 1-2.*



The Lord says that everything has its own nature. A scorpion stings, a snake bites, a cow gives milk, a tree bears fruit, the rivers flow, and the moon and sun shine. They all come into the world bringing their innate nature. One should neither praise, nor criticize them.

Even if you look at it from the viewpoint of Prakriti, everything is one; and if you look at it from the viewpoint of the Atma, it is one, as well. A person, who gets involved in criticism and praise, is unable to think about the Atma, or about the Lord. Nor can he ponder upon the tattva of things. He gets so entangled with people's good and bad qualities that he forgets the Ishwara.

A Mahatma had told me that all the creatures that exist have many good qualities, but they also have a couple of faults. Those faults are just like the black spot, called 'dithaunaa', which mothers apply to their children, to ward off the evil eye. This is why it is not worth looking at. Mahakavi\* Kalidasa has said –

एकोऽपि दोषो गुणसन्निपाते निमज्जतीन्द्रोः किरणेष्विवाङ्क ।

*E`kopi dosho gunasannipaate`nimajjateendo kirane`shvivaankah.*

This means that a single fault is drowned, when there are many good qualities, just as the mark on the moon is drowned in the radiance of the moon. In the same way, the one who focuses only on fault, becomes filled with faults, and the one who focuses only on good qualities gets filled with good qualities. So –

प्रत्यक्षेणानुमानेन निगमेनात्मसंविदा ।

आद्यन्तबदसज्ज्ञात्वा निसङ्गो विचरेदिह ॥ ११.२८.९.

*Pratyakshe`naanumaane`na nigame`naatmasamvidaa,*

*Aadyantabadasajgnaatvaa nisango vichare`dihah.*

11. 28. 9.

Pots, etc. are seen distinctly with our own eyes. When they break, their destruction, too, is seen by us. As the pot has parts, it is subject to destruction. Similarly, the earth's destruction can be inferred. However, the birth and destruction of the space is learnt from the scriptures, and through the experience of the Atma, we experience that nothings exists, apart from the Atma. So, instead of getting caught in things which have a beginning and an end, we should remain aloof, while living in this world. We should make a final conclusion that we are not attached to anything. There is no mental

burden for us to carry, when we become unattached. Non-attachment is our natural state, it is our natural form.

Just as the decisive thought about the all-pervading Lord results in our self-surrender, so, too, does the dualistic world get negated with the knowledge of the Brahman. The method for this has been spoken of, explaining how a person should discriminate. One should separate the body from the Atma, by understanding their nature. So long as the Atma is mixed with the body, and, until this separation is achieved, a person remains trapped in the dos and the don'ts, the hell and heaven of the body, the attachments and aversions of the body, and the joys and sorrows of the body.

The association of Mahatmas is for breaking these traps. However, if anyone tells you, "Come, I will make you free from old age, give you eternal life," don't get trapped by him. Because, यद् जन्म तद् अनित्यं "*yadjanyam tad anityam*" – the forms which are created, are bound to get destroyed, but the Reality is neither created, and nor is it destroyed. Names are kept and changed, but the Reality is changeless. So, when the forms of Brahma-Vishnu were made, their life spans were fixed simultaneously. At the time of the destruction of Creation, the forms of Brahma-Vishnu-Mahesh get merged in the Ishwara. In the same way, when one obtains tattvagnan, and understanding replaces all the misunderstandings caused by ignorance, every seemingly different item merges into the Paramatma, in whom no differences exist.

One of our Mahatmas had told me, that if you imagine the unchanging state, you can never succeed until you unite with the unchanging Paramatma. If you unite with that, which has kama, krodha, lobha, moha, shanti, shringara, adbhut, bibhatsa, then you can never attain an unchanging state. To attain an unchanging state, you have to become one with that, which is unchanging. The one who does not acknowledge the unchanging truth denies the Paramatma.

So, instead of getting caught in the spinning wheel of Siddhis. Instead of the futile attempt to make the body immortal, you should undertake satsang, and vivek, and atmanubhuti\*, to negate the duality seen in the world. To negate does not mean to eliminate, because the objects which appear, are mere perceptions. They are not the Reality.

Uddhavji then said, "Sir, what You said – that we should not criticize anyone, nor eulogize anyone, and see everyone as one essence – this is extremely difficult for people to do. I think that it is very difficult indeed, to develop such an attitude. So, please show me a method which is very simple."

“Very well, Uddhav,” said the Lord, “You have said what was in your heart. Now, listen. I will tell you, with great joy, something which is very simple. The best Dharma is –

कुर्यात् सर्वाणि कर्माणि मदर्थं शनकैः स्मरन्।  
मय्यर्पितमनश्चित्तो मद्धर्मात्ममनोरतिः ॥ ११.२९.९.

*Kuryaat sarvaani karmaani madartham shanakaih smaran,*  
*Mayyarpitamanashchitto maddharmaatmamanoratih.*  
11. 29. 9.

My Bhakta should do everything for Me alone, and gradually think more and more about Me. By doing this, his heart and mind will, in a few days, be totally offered up to Me.

इति सर्वाणि भूतानि मद्भावेन महाद्युते।  
सभाजयन् मन्यमानो ज्ञानं केवलमाश्रितः ॥  
ब्राह्मणे पुल्कसे स्तेने ब्रह्मण्येऽर्के स्फुलिङ्गके।  
अक्रूरे क्रूरके चैव समदृक् पण्डितो मतः ॥  
नरेष्वभीक्ष्णं भद्भावं पुंसो भावयतोऽचिरात्।  
स्पर्धासूयातिरस्काराः साहङ्कारा वियन्ति हि ॥ ११.२९.१३-१५

*Iti sarvaani bhootaani madbhaave`na mahaadyute`,*  
*Sabhaajayan manyamaano gnaanam ke`valamaashritah.*  
*Brahmane`pulkase`ste`ne`brahmany`rke`sfulingake`,*  
*Akroore`kroorake`chaiva samadrik pandito matah.*  
*Nare`shvabheekshanam madbhaavam punso bhaavayatochiraat,*  
*Spardhaasooyaatiraskaaraah saahankaraa viyanti hi.*  
11. 29. 13 -15.

Uddhav, only that sadhak, who takes recourse to the gnanadrishti\*, sees Me in all creatures and objects, and has equanimity towards a Brahmin, Chandal, thief, the Sun, a spark of fire, and compassionate and cruel people, should be considered a true Gnani. When the attitude is cultivated to consider all men and women as My forms, then in a few days the sadhak’s negative feelings – like competitiveness, envy, disdain, pride, etc. – are removed.

Look – even in the Gita, the Lord has said, “He who sees Me in all creatures, and sees all creatures in Me, is a Yogi. He is a samadarshi\*.

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।

ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥ ६.२९.

*Sarvabhootasthamaatmaanam sarvabhootaani chaatmani,*

*Eekshate`yogayuktaatmaa sarvatra samadarshanah.*

6. 29.

So, see Me, the Parameshwara, in all. And see also, that none are in Me – वदन्ति तत् तत्त्वविदः ‘*vadanti tat tattvavidah*’. I am the Ishwara, I am the jagat\*. It is My one form of Truth – the Satya-swaroop – which is in everything. What is Satya\*? The akhanda-satta\*, which is in everything, which is the experienced, indivisible Self, is called the Satya.

The person, who develops a feeling of the Satya, will have no desire to compete with anyone. He will never try to achieve greater worldly success than others. He will never be inclined to see faults in the good qualities of others, and he will never reject anyone. His ego will be annihilated.

Uddhav, the easiest method is to have the conviction that I am in the heart of all creatures. The person who develops Bhagvadbhava\* should experience that the flower worships the Lord with its beauty and fragrance. This earth, and all its fragrances, is engrossed in the worship of the Lord. All the rasas of water are engrossed in worshipping the Lord. The total brightness in the world is engrossed in the illumination of the Lord. The wind touches the Lord in worship. The sky worships the Lord through the sounds in it. All the objects of worship are the Lord, and it is He, who is worshipped by them. You are experiencing, within yourself, this elixir, so do not have any feelings of differentiation.

My friend, the Brahmin, the butcher, the thief, the Sun, the spark of fire, the cruel and the kind, are all involved in a ‘*khel*’\*, - let it go on. A game is, after all, a game. ‘*Khe*’ means the sky, the void, the Brahman. So, खे लीयते ‘*khe`leeyate*’ means the whole play will vanish in the sky, the void, the Brahman.

Ultimately, all this is the imagination of the mind. It is a picture upon an imaginary wall. It is a frolic of the Parabrahma Paramatma. It is the exuberance of the Atma. The one, who views it with equanimity, is called a Pandit. The meaning of Bhaktibhava is – “See, this is Shyam, this is Shyam, Shyam, only Shyam!” If the Lord is not seen everywhere, where is the Bhakti? That is why it is the tendency to see the Lord in everything, which is called the Bhagwat Dharma. And, if this somehow enters the life of a person, then you may take it that the Bhagwat Dharma has descended.

However, if somebody is running away from an attacking dog, and the feeling rises in his heart, “I will run to the Lord, and embrace His feet,” then

his effort to escape from the dog is also the Bhagwat Dharma. In Bhakti, the cause is not the most important aspect. Neither is the action. The important aspect is the intention behind the action. In the Smart Dharma, it is the eligibility of the person which is important, but in the Bhagwat Dharma, it is the intention which is important. The person who can bring the Bhagwat Dharma into his daily life becomes fit to receive the highest good.”

In the end, the Lord told Uddhav, “When a person folds his hands and turns towards Me, surrendering himself to me, at that very moment, all his duties end, and My duties begin.”

मर्त्यो यदा त्यक्तसमस्तकर्मा निवेदितात्मा विचिकीर्षितो मे।

तदामृतत्वं प्रतिपद्यमानो मयाऽऽत्मभूयाय च कल्पते वै॥ ११.२९.३४.

*Martyo yadaa tyaktasamastakarmaa nive`ditaatmaa vichikeershito me`,  
Tadaamritatvam pratipadyamaano mayaatmabhooyaaya cha kalpate`vai.  
11. 29. 34.*

विचिकीर्षितो मे ‘Vichikeershito me’- means विशिष्टं कर्तुं इष्टः ‘vishistam kartum ishtah’, meaning, “I desire to make him especially refined. Then, he becomes one with Me, he sees through My eyes, hears through My ears, and thinks through My intellect. He has no ears of his own, nor a nose, nor his own eyes.”

Look, Sir. You will remain unhappy as long as you have a difference of opinion with God. Your sorrows come when you disagree with the Lord. All sorrows end, the moment you agree with Him.

Uddhavji was deeply moved by the Lord’s sermon. He simply did not want to leave Him. His eyes brimmed with tears and his body tingled with love. He fell repeatedly at the feet of the Lord Shri Krishna, but Shri Krishna desired to fold up His Leela. So, Uddhavji obeyed the Lord’s command to go to Badrinath.

Shri Krishna was eager to end His play. At His advice, the Yaduvanshis decided to move to the curse-free Prabhas Kshetra\*, since the curse would cause upheavals at Dwarka. The Chandrama had been liberated from Daksha’s curse, at the Prabhas Kshetra.

How surprising was the decision, that liberation from their curse would not be possible in Dwarka, a city established by the Lord; and that it would be possible by going to the Prabhas Kshetra! Their faith in the Lord was absent, they had faith in the Prabhas Kshetra!

However, this was as per the Lord’s wishes. So, when they went to the Prabhas Kshetra, everybody had the ritual bath, and did the oblations. When it was time to eat, however, no one knows what all they ate and drank – भुक्त्वा

पीत्वा च वारुणीम् ‘bhuktvaa peetvaa cha vaaruneem’. Their thinking was deluded, and they began to quarrel amongst themselves. They formed into several groups. Since they had no weapons with them, they started to pull out tufts of the erka grass, and attack each other with it.

Balaramji and Shri Krishna tried to explain that they shouldn’t fight. When the thinking is negative, however, even a well-wisher seems like an enemy. So, these people began to attack even Rama-Krishna. Then, Rama-Krishna retaliated by also using the erka grass to kill them. The time of destruction was at hand. All of them died then and there. Shri Krishna saw His sons and grandsons killed before His eyes.

As mentioned earlier, Uddhav went to Badrinath at the command of Shri Krishna. Only Aniruddha’s son, Vajranabh remained at Dwarka. When everyone was killed at the Prabhas Kshetra, Balaramji went into a Samadhi, and gave up his body in a cave called the Sheshgufa, which can be seen even today. Shri Krishna sat down under a Peepal\* tree, with one foot crossed over another. The hunter, Jara, mistook it for a deer, and shot an arrow into the sole of the Lord’s foot. Jara means old age. This hunter, Jara, chases everybody.

Amongst the Jains, it is well known that everybody has to bear the fruits of their actions. The Jains do not believe in the Ishwara. They consider everybody to be a jeeva. They do not accept five things – the Ishwara, the Vedas, the Brahmins, the Yagyas with the fire worship, and purity by bathing at Pilgrimages. They say that even Rama-Krishna, and others, have to suffer the fruits of their actions. It was the same Bali, who Shri Ramachandra had shot from behind a bush, who was born as Jara, to shoot an arrow into Shri Krishna’s foot.

This logic, however, can be true for a jeeva, but not for the Ishwara. The Ishwara does not suffer the fruits of His actions. The Lord Shri Krishna has stated in the Gita,

न मां कर्माणि लिम्पन्ति न मे कर्मफले स्पृहा।

इति मां योऽभिजानाति कर्मभिर्न स बध्यते॥ ४.१४.

*Na maam karmaani limpanti na me`karmafale`sprihaa,*

*Iti maam yobhijaanaati karmabhirna sa badhyate`.*

4. 14.

This means that the Ishwara is the abhokta\* of the karmafal\*. Even he who obtains this knowledge, becomes free of the fruits of his actions.

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj says, “Parikshit, you know that the Lord Shri Krishna had summoned the dead son of His Guru, and restored him alive to

his parents. You know He saved you from the Brahmastra, even after you were burnt by it. Why did He not save and keep His body? The Lord thought, “If I keep My body, than the people in the world – the Saints, Mahatmas, and Gnanis – will say, ‘We should also keep our bodies.’ Their attachment to their bodies will linger, whereas the ideal is that they should not even attempt to preserve their bodies”.

तथाप्यशेषस्थितिसम्भवाप्ययेष्वनन्यहेतुर्यदशेषशक्तिधृक् ।

नच्छत् प्रणेतुं वपुर्त्र शेषितं मर्त्येन किं स्वस्थगतिं प्रदर्शयन् ॥ ११.३१.१३.

*Tathaapyashe`shasthitisambhavaapyaye`shvananyahe`turyadashe`chashaktidhrik,*

*Nacchat prane`tum vapuratra she`shitam martye`na kim svasthagatim pradarshayan.*

11. 31. 13.

After this, is described how Shri Krishna’s chariot and horses flew away. Lord’s weapons also went with them. He had explained to His charioteer, Daruk, about going to Dwarka, and informing Vasudevji, Ugrasen and the others. Daruk did as the Lord instructed. The whole city was in an uproar. Balaramji’s wives became Satis\* with his body. Shri Krishna’s wives did not obtain His body, so they could not become Satis with Him. Their bodies caught fire individually.

You see, the Lord’s body can be viewed from three angles. One, from the bhautik (worldly) level, a second from the adhidaivik level, and the third from the adhyatmik level. From the spiritual aspect (the Adhyatmik level), He is everybody’s Atma – आत्मानं अखिलात्मनाम् ‘*aatmaanam akhilaatmanaam*’. Birth and death don’t touch Him. From the subtle aspect (Adhidaivik level), His body is divine, Self-effulgent, propitious, and people obtain benefits by meditating upon it. The divine body cannot be burnt, and that is why He did not burn it, and took it with Him, when He went to His own land.

लोकाभिरामां स्वतनुं धारणाध्यानमंगलम् ।

योगधारणयाऽऽग्नेय्यदग्ध्वा धामाविशत् स्वकम् ॥ ११.३१.६.

*Lokaabhiraamaam svatanum dhaaranaadhyaanamangalam,*

*Yogadhaaranayaagne`yyaadagdhvaa dhaamaavishat svakam.*

11. 31. 6.

From the worldly angle (the Bhautik level), there are many kinds of stories about the Shrivigraha\* of the Lord Shri Krishna, to be found in the Puranas. The Padmapurana says that the Lord’s body was carried by the sea, to

Jagannathpuri. The tribals there caught, and worshipped it, and the King, Indradyumna, made the Jagannath temple for that body. You can read the story in the Mahatmya\* of the Neelachalpurī.

तपःशरीरे रामस्य वासुदेवस्य चोभयोः ।  
अन्विष्य दाहयामास पुरुषैराप्तकारिभिः ॥

*Tapahshareere` raamasya vaasude`vasya chobhayoh,  
Anvishaya daahayaamaasa purushairaptakaaribhih.*

Thus, there were three kinds of fates of the body of the Lord; the gross, the subtle, and the spiritual. From all three viewpoints, the Lord established His body – which bestows good fortune to the whole world – in the hearts of people, and then departed for His supreme abode.

The twelfth Skandha starts after this. In this, Shri Shukadevji Maharaj has named and described several Kings of Kaliyuga, and explained how adharma\* had increased.

Then, explaining how we can save ourselves from the evils of Kaliyuga, Shri Shukadevji Maharaj told King Parikshit, ‘Even though the Kaliyuga is a storehouse of evils, it has one great virtue. The virtue is that one can obtain the Paramatma by merely chanting and singing the name of Shri Krishna. In the Satyayuga, people had to meditate. In the Tretayuga, they had to worship through Yagyas; in the Dvaparyuga, they had to do ritual worship. In the Kaliyuga, however, a person can get the same results by merely singing with devotion.

कलेर्दोषनिधे राजन्नस्ति ह्येको महान् गुणः ।  
कीर्तनादेव कृष्णस्य मुक्तसङ्गः परं व्रतेत् ॥  
कृते यद् ध्यायतो विष्णुं त्रेतायां यजतो मखैः ।  
द्वापरैः परिचर्यायां कलौ तद्धरिकीर्तनात् ॥ १२.३.५१-५२

*Kale`rdoshanidhe` raajannasti hye`ko mahaan gunah,  
Keertanaade`va krishnasya maktasangah param vrate`t.  
Krite`yad dhyaayato vishnum tre`taayaam yajato makhaih,  
Dvaapare`paricharyaayaam kalau tadharikeertanaat.  
12. 3. 51-52.*

You see, Rajashray\* is also the Paramatma. Dharmashray\* is also the Paramatma. Kalashray\* is also the Paramatma, and Pralayashray is also the Paramatma.

Shri Shukadevji Maharaj told Parikshit about four kinds of pralays – one is nitya\* parlay, the second is naimittik\* pralay, the third is the prakrit\* pralay,



and the fourth is the atyantik\* pralay. Moksha is the name of the atyantik pralay. However, Moksha does not come and go from some place, nor does anything happen. It is nitya-mukta\*.

I once asked Shri Udiyababaji Maharaj, “Maharaj, between jeevanmukti\* and videhamukti\*, which is greater?”

Baba replied, “Look, brother, neither is greater. What happens is that with the destruction of ignorance, one abides as the Self-revealing Consciousness, which is non-different from the Brahman. This abidance in one’s natural State – which is the sub-stratum of all that exists – is termed as liberation. So, there is nothing to be attained, really. There is only abiding in the natural State, as brought about by the destruction of ignorance.”

Parikshit attained this absolute liberation when Shri Shukadevji Maharaj ultimately gave him this sermon –

अहं ब्रह्म परं धाम ब्रह्माहं परमं पदम्।  
एवं समीक्षन्नात्मानमात्मन्याधाय निष्कले॥  
दशन्तं तक्षकं पादे लेलिहानं विषाननैः।  
न द्रक्ष्यसि शरीरं च विश्वं च पृथगात्मनः॥ १२.५.११.१२.

*Aham brahma param dhaama brahmaaham paramam padam,  
E`vam sameekshanannaatmaanamaatmanyadhaaya nishkale`.  
Dashantam takshakam paade` le`lihaanam vishaananaih,  
Na drakshyasi shareeram cha vishvam cha prithagaatmanah.  
12. 5. 11-12.*

“Parikshit, do thou contemplate on the real meaning of the term ‘Tvam’ – which is the same as ‘Aham’ – the pure, consciousness which witnesses. This witnessing consciousness is identical with the Supreme Reality, which is non-dual, and is the sub-stratum of the entire creation. You are that non-dual Being.

Do thou resolve – ‘That I Am’, ‘I Am That’. It is not as though your Being is contained in the Brahman, or that the Brahman is contained in your Being. Both are actually one, non-different from each other.

Do thou understand that the Supreme Being is You, and You are the Supreme Being. It should not be thought that they get mixed up, and become one. Neither does the Jeeva get mixed up with the Ishwara, nor does the Ishwara get mixed up with the Jeeva. In reality, both are a single liberated Being.

Parikshit, do thou contemplate on the Self, and experience the oneness of the Self with the Brahman.

Now, the takshak – whether he be called the Vishwakarma\*, or Kala (Time), or a serpent, who scrapes, cuts, and sets the world right – may come and bite your foot. You will not be aware of any sensation. Your experience will be such that you will not view the body, and the world, as being distinct from the Self, the Consciousness”

After giving this sermon, Shri Shukadevji Maharaj asked King Parikshit, “Well, Dear, have you listened attentively to all I said, and has your ignorance been dispelled?”

Parikshit replied, “Yes, Maharaj, my ignorance is dispelled. You instructed me in knowledge and experience, about the absolute Parabrahm Paramatma, and carried me across the darkness of nescience. Now I am merging the mind, and speech, in the Self” –

अज्ञानं च निरस्तं मे ज्ञानविज्ञाननिष्ठया ।

भवता दर्शितं क्षेमं परं भगवतः पदम् ॥ १२.६.७.

*Agnaanam cha nirastam me` gnaanavignaananishtayaa,  
Bhavataa darshitam kshe`mam param bhagavatah padam.*

12. 6. 7.

After these words, Parikshit did a ritual worship of Shri Shukadevji Maharaj, who then took his leave and departed at once. Parikshit seated himself in a Yogic posture, on the bank of the Ganga, and began to meditate upon the Lord. Kala is always attached to everything which is born, in this world. So, the takshak came and bit him. This caused his body to turn into ashes. However, his body had already been reduced to the status of ashes by the gnanagni\*.

Now see, Raja Parikshit’s body had already been burnt by the Brahmastra, and the Lord had saved him at that time. This time, when Parikshit’s body was burnt by the verbal Brahmadastra\* of the Brahmin, he was saved by the Shrimad Bhagwat. However, when a body is burnt by gnanagni, the remains are not burnt by fire. So, Raja Parikshit was burnt by a divine fire. The verbal curse was countered with words. Raja Parikshit thus attained liberation.

The Suta-Shaunak dialogue begins after the departure of Shri Shukadevji Maharaj. Sutaji says that when Parikshit’s son did the Sarpa-yagya\*, and the takshak began to burn in it, then Vrihaspati stopped it.

Then, at Shaunakji’s request, Sutaji explained how the Vedas were divided, and how their various branches were formed, and how they continued and survived.

In-between, there is an episode about some violence done by Vaishampayana. Instead of undertaking the Prayashchita\* himself, he asked his disciples to undertake it on his behalf. They began to do the penance. Just then, Vaishampayana's other disciple, Yagyavalka said, "Guruji, these students are like little partridges and quails – what penance will they do? I am a disciple of yours, with the requisite ability, and will undertake the penance by myself." This annoyed Vaishampayana. He rebuked Yagyavalka. "You think that these Brahmin, Brahmachari students of mine are to be disdained, and you are showing them disrespect! Go – none of the learning I have imparted to you will be of any use to you. Leave all the learning you have acquired from me." Yagyavalka obeyed his Guru, and gave up everything he had learnt from him. After that he took up ascetic worship, ritual worship and prayers. The Sun was pleased, and gave Yagyavalka a sermon of mantras which were not known to others. The branches of the Yajur Veda started from these.

After this, Sutaji answered Shaunakji's questions, describing the Lord's physique, ornaments, and weapons. "The feet of the Purush\* form of the Lord, are the earth," he said. "The head is the svarga\*, the nabhi\* is the sky, the eyes are the Sun, His nose is the wind, and His ears are the directions.

Upon His chest, the Lord wears the jeev-chaitanya\* in the form of the Kaustuv mani, and wears the radiance of the spirit in the form of the Shrivatsa\*. His garland is the Maya. His pitambar is the metre, and the yagyopavit is the pranav\*. His earrings are the forms of the Sankhya-yoga, and in the form of His crown, He wears the Brahmaloaka. It is the primordial Nature which is His Sheshshaiya, and His lotus-like naval has the excellent qualities like Dharma, gnan, etc.

Similarly, His mace, called Kaumodaka, is the form of the essence of the spirit. His conch shell, called Panchajanya, is the form of the essence of water; and the discus He hold, called the Sudarshan chakra, is the essence of brightness. His sword is the form of the clear sky; His shield is the form of ignorance. His bow, called Sharang, is the form of Time (or death), and His quiver is the form of action. The senses are His arrows, and the mind which is filled with the power to act, is His chariot.

The places where He can be worshipped are the Sun, or the fire. The purification of the four-fold mind is the mantra-diksha\*, and to destroy all sins is His worship.

Sutaji thus elaborated to Shaunak and other Rishis, about the rules of worshipping the Lord, who is Laxmipati, as described in the Pancharaatra, and other tantras.

At Shaunakji's request, Sutaji started narrating the story of Markandeya Rishi. He said that Markandeya, the son of Mrikand Rishi, was worshipping the Lord. He had no desires of any kind. The fact is that when a person wants the Lord to fulfill some desire, he considers the object of his desire to be more important than the Lord. It is not a sign of respect, that when the Lord appears before a person, the person asks for some toy, instead of asking for the Lord, Himself!

Markandeyaji had no desire whatsoever, but when the Lord Nara-Narayana appeared before him, and told him to ask for a boon since He was pleased with Markandeyaji's stuti. Markandeyaji prayed, "Sir, I have obtained Your vision, and desire nothing else. However, I want to see what Your Maya is. Please grace me with a glimpse of Your Maya."

The Lord was quite surprised to hear Markandeyaji's request. However, He said, "All right, you will have a glimpse."

One evening, Markandeyaji sat on the bank of the river Subhadraa, to do the evening Sandhya Vandan worship. It seemed to him that the sea was rising on all sides, coming towards him, flooding everything in its path. The water reached him and swept him away, but he did not die. He saw the whole world submerged in water. Sometimes, some creatures of the sea would swallow him, and sometimes some other creatures would swallow him, but they would throw him out again. He wandered thus for several millions of years. Ultimately, he saw an island with a Banyan tree on it, and he saw a tiny baby sleeping on a cupped leaf of the tree.

Now, see one thing stated by the Lord, in the form of the Vedas. He says, "Oh, Humans! This village of yours is balanced on the peepal tree, and your lifespan is just alike a drop of water on a leaf, which may fall any minute."

Now, Markandeya saw that the baby was sucking his own big toe. The Mahatmas have said, about this, that the baby was the Lord Balgopal\* Himself. He was sucking His big toe, to check what sweetness it has, which makes people drink the water touched by it.

When Markandeyaji went close to this baby, he was sucked in with the air, when the baby took a breath. Inside, he saw hundreds of thousand of universes. So much so, that he even had a glimpse of the Subhadraa river, and his own Ashram. He saw himself sitting in meditation. Then he emerged again, when the baby exhaled. When he went to bow down to the baby, he realized that there was no baby, and no other scene. He was back at the same spot, on the same day, at the same time, as when he started his Sandhya Vandan.

Markandeyaji thought, "Oh, what was all that which I saw?" Then he understood that it was the play of Maya, which he had seen. Maya hid the

Paramatma, hid the truth, and showed – like a magic show – that, which did not exist. Markandeyaji was wonderstruck. He became engrossed in the prayers and meditation of the Lord, again.

One day, the Lord Gauri-Shankar passed Markandeyaji. Seeing him, Gauriji said, “See how this learned Brahmin is doing severe asceticism. Let us go and grant him a boon.” When they went close, Markandeyaji was meditating, and did not see them. Shankarji’s sankalpa broke his meditation. When Markandeyaji opened his eyes, he saw the Lord Gauri-Shankar standing before him. He bowed down to them, worshipped and eulogized them. Shankarji told him to ask for a boon. Markandeyaji said, “Sir, I once asked for a boon, and saw such a play of Maya, that I suffered badly. What boon can I ask for now? Even so, please grant me the boon that I should always have unflinching Bhakti for the Lord, for you, and for the Mahatmas.”

The Lord Shankar was very happy, and granted all three boons. Over and above them, he bestowed one more. “You will live long, and you will become a Puranacharya\*”

Sutaji then listed the subjects in the Shrimad Bhagwat, and spoke about the numbers of shlokas in the Puranas. Then he said –

सर्ववेदान्तसारं यद् ब्रह्मात्मैकत्वलक्षणम्।

वस्त्वद्वितीयं तन्निष्ठं कैवल्यैकप्रयोजनम्॥ १२.१३-१२.

*Sarvave`daantasaaram yad brahmaatmaikatvalakshanam,*

*Vastvadviteeyam tannishtham kaivalyaikaprayojanam.*

12. 13. 12.

The Shrimad Bhagwat contains the essence of the Vedanta. What is the essence of the Vedanta? What is its definition? The essence and the definition of Vedanta is the fact that the Brahman and the Atma are one. Is there any dualism in the forms of actions and attributes? No, Oh, no! It is an indivisible object, which has no connection to duality, whatsoever. All right, does it contain Sayujya\*, etc? No, there is only Kaivalya\*. The purpose of the Bhagwat is to achieve the state of Being, nothing except total liberation, immediate liberation, and the knowledge that our Being is ever free. This is the total, conclusive purport of the Shrimad Bhagwat. Even so, it is said –

सर्ववेदान्तसारं हि श्रीभागवतमिष्यते।

तद्रसामृततृप्तस्य नान्यत्र स्याद्व्रतिः क्वचित्॥ १२.१३.१५

*Sarvave`daantasaaram hi shreebhaagavatamishyate`,*

*Tadrasaamritatritasya naanyatra syaadratih kvachit.*

12. 13. 15.

If anyone develops a love for the Shrimad Bhagwat – which is the essence of all the Vedas and Vedanta – if he finds fulfillment in the nectarine purport, then he will no longer be attracted to anything worldly. He will not be trapped in the play of the world. He will, of course, become detached from the world; and he will certainly obtain the love for the Lord. Furthermore, he will lose interest in all other Shastras and love only the Shrimad Bhagwat.

In the end, Sutaji told Shaunakji and the other Rishis, that the Shrimad Bhagwat is that tilak of all the Puranas. It is the supreme wealth of the Vaishnavas. Moreover, it contains the discovery of the naishkarmya\*, as well as Gnan-Bhakti-Vairagya\*. तच्छृण्वन् विपठन् विचारणपरो ‘*Tacchrinvan vipathan vichaaranaparo*’ – the one who listens to it, reads, it and thinks about it, obtains Bhakti for the Lord, and gets liberated.

Nobody can understand the Shrimad Bhagwat through the grammatical meanings. It is understood only through Bhakti –

भक्त्या भागवतं ग्राह्यम् नाभ्यासेन न विद्यया ।

*Bhaktiyaa bhaagavatam graahyam naabhyaase`na na vidyayaa.*

If someone desires to grasp the purport of the Shrimad Bhagwat through study or practice, he will never succeed. The Shrimad Bhagwat is only Bhaktigrahya\* – it can be assimilated only if the person has devotion for the Lord.

After this, Shri Shukadevi is saluted along with the Lord. Shri Shukadevi Maharaj is engrossed in his own supreme bliss, and there is no duality in him. He was prompted by compassion to narrate the Shrimad Bhagwat, and the purpose was the good of people.

Compassion arose first in the heart of the Lord Narayana, and He lectured Brahmaji about it. Then the Lord entered Brahmaji, and through Brahmaji, lectured Narad about it. Then, taking the form of the Bhagwat, He entered Naradji, and Narayana Himself became Narad. Then – in the form of Narad – the Lord Narayana lectured Vyas about it. And Vyas, who had merged into the essence of the Bhagwat, became Narayana. Then, the Lord Narayana – in the form of Vyas, lectured Shri Shukadevi. Thus, Narayana adopted many, many forms, to narrate the Shrimad Bhagwat Mahapurana. Finally, Shukadevi narrated it to Parikshit (also the essence of the Lord), whose Atma had been pervaded by Shri Krishna Himself, at his death. The Shrimad Bhagwat is, thus, the prime jewel amongst all the Puranas.

It is a tradition to chant these two verses, at the end of each session of the discourse on the Shrimad Bhagwat –

भवे भवे यथा भक्तिः पादयोस्तव जायते ।  
तथा कुरुष्व देवेश नाथस्त्वं नो यतः प्रभो ॥  
नामसंकीर्तनं यस्य सर्वपापप्रणाशनम् ।  
प्रणामो दुःखशमनस्तं नमामि हरिं परम् ॥ १२.१३.२२-२३.

*Bhave` bhave` yathaa bhakti paadayostava jaayate`  
Tathaa kurushva de`ve`sha naathastvam no yatah prabho.  
Naamasankirtanam yasya sarvapaapapranaashanam,  
Pranaamo dukhashamanastam namaami harim param.  
12. 13. 22-23.*

“Lord, You are my Master. Grace me that I may have Bhakti for Your feet in my heart, in every birth I take. Because, I am Your servant.

I bow down to the Lord, Shri Hari, whose name, when chanted, destroys everything inauspicious. All sorrows are destroyed by listening to the names of the Lord, or by describing them, or by chanting them. The sins are destroyed by speaking the name; and the sorrow – which is the fruit of the sins – is destroyed by bowing down to the Lord. Paapa-nasha\* through nama-sankirtan\*; and prarabhda-nasha\* and dukha-nasha\* through pranama\* – मेटत कठिन कुअंक भालके *me`tat kathina kuanka bhaalake``.*”

The removal of the misfortune and poverty – which is the preordained fate of a person – can also be achieved by bowing down at the feet of the Lord. The name of the Lord destroys sin, and also the sorrow which comes as its fruit.

So come, let us bow down thrice to the Lord Shri Hari, and chant –

तं नमामि हरिं परम्! तं नमामि हरिं परम्!! तं नमामि हरिं परम्!!!

*Tam nammami harim param! Tam namaami harim param!! Tam namaami harim param!!!*

Now, I say two things more, to all of you. The organizers of this Satsang – Shri Laxminivasji Birla and his wife – have chosen such an excellent topic, that I experienced great joy in speaking about it. I believe that all of you have also enjoyed the discourse upon the Shrimad Bhagwat, since you are also forms of my Atma. The sound vibrations which were spread in the atmosphere have spread joy all around. The speaker and the listeners, all got an opportunity to listen and think about the Lord.

Despite some discomfort, you have all listened very quietly. You left the excellent furniture of your homes, and sat on the grass. You were unshaken by the high winds and the dust it raised. Perhaps some of you were bitten by an insect from the grass you sat on, but you endured it quietly. The inconveniences you endured, were your tapasya, which you undertook, to listen to the Shrimad Bhagwat. So, I am grateful to you, that – with you as the instrument – a little of my time was used for the Lord, and for the Bhagwat, and my speech could be utilized for a good cause.

It is to your credit, and it is your greatness, that you made me sit on an elevated seat, while you sit at a lower level, to listen to the Shrimad Bhagwat. The one who sits on a higher seat is not the greater person. The greater person is the one who gives the higher seat to another. That person's magnanimity deserves praise.

I state again, that you have graced me, by making me sit on an elevated seat, and gave me the good fortune of this opportunity to speak on the Shrimad Bhagwat. My heart is filled with gratitude, again and again, towards all of you. Shri Laxminivasji Birla and his wife have already fixed a Satsang for next year. So, if the Lord keeps us all healthy, we will again have the good fortune to listen to, and describe God-related topics, around the same time next year. By God's Grace, may Shri Laxminivasji Birla and his wife continue to have such Godly thoughts and inclinations, again and again, which result in opportunities for people to escape from worldly thoughts, and engage in thoughts about the Lord.

Shri Krishna Bhagawan ki Jai! Victory to the Lord Shri Krishna!

Om Shantih Shantih Shantih



## Glossary

Aagrah, meaning intense urge  
Aakriti, meaning shape  
Aasakta, meaning in love  
Aashik, meaning lover  
Aastikya, meaning faith  
Aatyantik, meaning the ultimate  
Abhay, meaning fearlessness  
Abhichar, pronounced abhichaar, meaning worship for destruction.  
Abhinivesh, pronounced abhinive`sh, meaning attachment, or fear of death  
Abhinnanimmittopaadaan kaaran, meaning the basic stuff which is used, as well as the one who uses it, to create.  
Abhokta, pronounced abhoktaa, meaning the one who experiences non-enjoyership  
Achala, meaning unmoving  
Acharya, pronounced aachaarya, meaning Teacher  
Achintya means unthinkable, unimaginable.  
Achyut, a name of the Lord, meaning the one who never falls from his position  
Adbhut, meaning extraordinary  
Adharma, that which is contrary to Dharma  
Adhibhautik, pronounced aadhibhautik, meaning gross  
Adhibhoot means the gross  
Adhidaiva means the divine  
Adhidaivik, pronounced aadhidaivik, meaning spiritual  
Adhidevta, pronounced adhide`vtaa, meaning subtle demigod  
Adhikaran, meaning support.  
Adhikari, pronounced adhikaari, meaning eligible person  
Adhiroodha, meaning being overcome  
Adhishthan, pronounced adhishthaan, meaning sub-stratum  
Adhudaivik, pronounced aadhidaivik, meaning subtle  
Adhyarop, pronounced adhyaarop, meaning superimposed.  
Adhyaropit pronounced adhyaaropit, means superimposed.  
Adhyas, pronounced adhyaas, meaning a super imposed.  
Adhyatma pronounced adhyaatma, means the philosophy of spirituality.  
Adhyatmik, pronounced aadhyaatmik, meaning spiritual  
Adideva, pronounced aadide`v, meaning the primordial Devta  
Aditya, pronounced aaditya, meaning the Sun.  
Adityas, pronounced aadityas, meaning the sons of Diti, who were Devtas – demi gods.  
Advait, meaning Non-duality,  
Advaitswaroop, meaning the personification of non-duality  
Advitiya, pronounced adviteeya, meaning non-dual.  
Aghasur, pronounced aghaasur  
Agni means fire.  
Agnyan, pronounced agnaan, meaning ignorance; a (lack of) gnan (knowledge).  
Agyaat Sakhaa means the unknown friend and companion.  
Aham, meaning the individual 'I'  
Aham-pada, meaning the 'I' factor

Ahankaararoopa ahankar, pronounced ahankaararoopa ahankar, means the individual awareness of being a separate entity  
 Ahankar, pronounced ahankaar, meaning the subtle ego  
 Ahimsa, pronounced ahimsaa, meaning non-violence  
 Aishwarya, meaning glory and luxury  
 Aja, pronounced ajaa, meaning Maya.  
 Ajamil, pronounced ajaamil  
 Akarma, meaning lack of action, or meaningless action  
 Akashvani, pronounced aakaashvaani, meaning a celestial voice  
 Akhand-satta, pronounced akhand-sattaa, meaning the indivisible existence  
 Akrura, meaning not cruel  
 Akshat, meaning whole grains of rice  
 Akshauhini, one Akshauhini has 109350 infantry, 65,610 cavalry, 21870 chariots and 21870 elephants  
 Alak, meaning curls.  
 Amalatma Purush, meaning the pure Atma, the Lord  
 Amavashya, pronounced amaavashyaa, meaning no moon  
 Amrit Kalash, meaning the vessel containing the elixir  
 Amrit, meaning elixir  
 Anaadi means without beginning.  
 Anandaghan, pronounced aanandghan, meaning blissful.  
 Anandaswaroop, meaning bliss incarnate  
 Anant means without an end.  
 Anatma, pronounced anaatmaa, meaning inanimate  
 Anitya means transient.  
 Annamaya sheath of the gross body, which is made of anna (food)  
 Anshuman, pronounced anshumaan  
 Antahakaran, meaning the 'inner organ', comprising manas (mind), buddhi (intellect), chitta (inclinations) and ahankara (subtle ego).  
 Ante` matih saa gatih, meaning our last thoughts lead us.  
 Anugraha, meaning Grace  
 Anurag, pronounced anuraag, meaning attachment  
 Anushasan Parva, pronounced anushaasan parv, meaning the portion of discipline.  
 Anushthaan, meaning a ritual with a fixed purpose for a fixed duration, with certain regulations.  
 Anushthup Chanda, meaning a poetic meter.  
 Anvay, meaning concomitance  
 Anvay-Vyatire`k means concomitance-variation  
 Apaana vayu, pronounced apaana vaayu, meaning one of the five winds in our body  
 Aparicchinnna means not separate, unified.  
 Aparigraha, meaning not hoarding anything  
 Aparoksha meaning subtle.  
 Apasaras, pronounced apsaraas, meaning celestial nymphs.  
 Apoorva, meaning the unseen potency of an act of the remote past  
 Arishtasura, pronounced arishtaasur  
 Artha is the second human achievement, meaning material wealth  
 Arti, pronounced aarti, meaning a ritual of worship, using a lamp.  
 Asana, pronounced aasan, meaning a seat or mat, to sit on, and also a yogic posture

Asanchay, meaning not saving anything  
 Asanga, meaning unattached.  
 Asangata, pronounced asangataa, meaning aloofness  
 Ashram, pronounced aashram, meaning a retreat, also one of the four stages of life  
 Ashrama Dharma means the Dharma for the different stages of life.  
 Ashta siddhis, the eight supernatural powers  
 Ashtadhaa Prakriti means the eight faceted nature of creation  
 Ashutosh, meaning easily pleased, another name of the Lord Shiva.  
 Ashvamedha, pronounced ashvame`dh, meaning horse sacrifice.  
 Asmita, pronounced asmitaa, meaning the sense of the ego  
 Asteya, pronounced aste`ya, meaning having no desire for what is not rightfully ours  
 Astikta, pronounced aastiktaa, meaning belief in God  
 Asura agni, meaning a demonic fire  
 Asura visarga means those with demonic tendencies.  
 Asura yoni, meaning having the body of a demon.  
 Asura, meaning demon. Sura means demi god, and a+sura means not godly.  
 Atithi seva, pronounced atithi se`vaa, meaning service to guests  
 Atma, pronounced aatmaa, meaning Soul  
 Atma-Anatma, pronounced aatmaa-anaatmaa, meaning the eternal and the seemingly real, transitory  
 Atmabal, pronounced aatmabal, meaning moral courage or inner strength  
 Atmabodha, pronounced aatmabodha, meaning the knowledge of the Atman  
 Atmachintan, pronounced aatmachintan, meaning reflection upon the Atma  
 Atmadev, pronounced aatmade`v, meaning the Lord who is our Atma  
 Atmagnan, pronounced aatmagnaan, meaning knowledge of the Atma  
 Atman means the soul.  
 Atmanubhuti, pronounced aatmaanubhooti, meaning the experience of the Atma  
 Atmaram, pronounced aatmaaraam, meaning blissfully content within His own Atma  
 Atmatattva, pronounced aatmatattva, meaning the essence of the Atma  
 Atur, pronounced aatur  
 Atyantik, pronounced aatyantik, meaning absolute  
 Avadhoot, meaning a wandering monk.  
 Avaran bhang, pronounced aavaran bhung, meaning the removal of ignorance  
 Avatar, pronounced avataar, meaning a descent of the Lord, as incarnations  
 Avidya Granthi, pronounced avidyaa granthi, meaning an imaginary knot which ties the true Self to the body and mind, nescience  
 Avidya, pronounced avidyaa, meaning ignorance or nescience  
 Avikaari, meaning unchanging  
 Avirbhoot means manifestation  
 Ayurveda, pronounced ayurve1da, meaning the Veda which teaches us how to get good health and long life.  
 Baal, meaning children.  
 Badh samanadhikaran, pronounced baadh samaanaadhikaran, meaning negating both 'I' and the 'other'  
 Bakasura, pronounced bakaasur  
 Balgopal, pronounced baalgopaal, meaning the child Krishna  
 Balidaan, meaning the sacrifice, or charity performed by Bali.  
 Bhaavaakaara, meaning emotionally united with the Lord with form

Bhaavadvaita, meaning non-duality of feeling  
 Bhadra, meaning noble; also bhaadra, which is the name of a lunar month  
 Bhadra, the name of one of Shri Krishna's wives, pronounced bhadraa  
 Bhadramaas, pronounced bhaadramaas, meaning the month of Bhadra.  
 Bhagavad bhavana, pronounced bhagavad bhaavnaa, meaning the feeling that everything is the Lord  
 Bhagavadiya, pronounced bhagavadeeya, meaning of the Lord.  
 Bhagwan, meaning the Lord  
 Bhagwat Dharma, pronounced bhaagwat dharm, meaning the Dharma propounded by the Bhagwat  
 Bhagwat, pronounced bhaagvat (meaning of the Lord).  
 Bhagwatamrit. Pronounced bhaagwataamrit, meaning the amrit (elixir) of Bhagwan (the Lord)  
 Bhagwats, pronounced bhaagvats, meaning great devotees.  
 Bhajan, meaning devotional singing or remembering God lovingly.  
 Bhakta, meaning devotee  
 Bhakti marg, meaning the path of devotion  
 Bhakti means devotion.  
 Bhakti sampraday, pronounced Bhakti sampradaay, meaning the tradition of Bhakti  
 Bhakti Shastra, pronounced Bhakti shaastra, meaning the scriptures pertaining to Bhakti  
 Bhakti Yoga is to attach ourselves to the Lord through devotion (bhakti)  
 Bhaktibhava, pronounced bhaktibhaav, meaning feeling of devotion  
 Bhakti-gnan-karmayoga, meaning devotion-knowledge and worship through action  
 Bhaktigrahya, pronounced bhaktigraahya, meaning understood by Bhakti  
 Bharat, pronounced bhaarata, meaning ancient India.  
 Bharatvarsha, pronounced bhaaratvarsh.  
 Bhautik, meaning gross  
 Bhava, pronounced bhaav, meaning feeling  
 Bhaya, meaning fear.  
 Bheda, pronounced bhe`d, meaning the division  
 Bhishmapitamah pronounced bheeshmapitaamah.  
 Bhog means self indulgence.  
 Bhogabhoomi, meaning the land of indulgence.  
 Bhootasarga means the different types of creatures.  
 Bhram means false impression.  
 Bhramar Geet, meaning the song of the bee  
 Bhringee, meaning blackbee, a kind of insect  
 Bhudevi, pronounced bhoode`vi, meaning the Goddess Earth  
 Bhupati, meaning the husband of the Earth, meaning the Lord Vishnu  
 Bhuvanabhushana, meaning the ornament of the world  
 Bibhatsa, meaning horrible  
 Brahmachari, pronounced brahmachaari, meaning celibate student  
 Brahmavid means the one who knows the Brahman  
 Brahma Kalpa means the eon of Brahma.  
 Brahma, pronounced brahmaa, the Creator  
 Brahmaakaar, meaning being one with the formless Brahman  
 Brahmacharya means celibacy

Brahmacharyashrama, pronounced brahmacharyaashram, meaning the celibate stage of life  
 Brahmadandastra, pronounced brahmadandastra, meaning the weapon of an invisible curse, given by a Brahmin  
 Brahmagnani, pronounced brahmagnaani, meaning one who knows the Brahman  
 Brahmahatya, pronounced brahmahatyaa, meaning the crime of killing a Brahmin.  
 Brahmahrid, meaning the Brahman in the lake of the heart.  
 Brahmaloaka means the land (loka) of the Brahma  
 Brahmananda, pronounced brahmaanand, meaning the bliss of the Brahman.  
 Brahmanas, meaning the priestly cast.  
 Brahmanda, pronounced brahmaand, meaning the egg of Brahma, the egg of the cosmos  
 Brahmarandhra, an invisible opening on the crown of the head  
 Brahmastra, pronounced brahmaastra, meaning the invincible weapon of Brahma.  
 Brahmaatmaikya bodha means the knowledge that nothing exists except the one Brahman.  
 Brahmavidya, pronounced brahmavidyaa, meaning the knowledge of the Brahman.  
 Brahmin, meaning priest  
 Brahm-mukti, meaning liberation, knowing oneself as the Brahman  
 Buddha meaning enlightened.  
 Buddhi, meaning intellect  
 Chaandra Tattva, meaning the essence of the moon  
 Chaitanya, meaning spirit, life, the sentience, intelligence, supreme spirit, All-being  
 Chakra, meaning discus  
 Chakravarti Samrat, pronounced chakravarti samraat, meaning an Emperor  
 Chala, meaning movable  
 Chandala, pronounced chaandaal, meaning a low caste person  
 Chandra Vansha, meaning the lineage of Chandra, the moon  
 Chandra Vanshi, meaning of the lineage of Chandra, the Moon  
 Chandra, meaning Moon  
 Chandrama, pronounced chandramaa, meaning the moon.  
 Chandrayana Vrat, pronounced chandraayana vrat, meaning a ritualistic diet.  
 Chanur, pronounced chaanoor  
 Charanamrita, pronounced charanaamrit, meaning the elixir of the water touched by the Lord's feet.  
 Chaturdashi, meaning the fourteenth date of the lunar calendar  
 Chaturmas, pronounced chaturmaas, meaning four months in the rainy season  
 Chaturyugi, meaning four Yugas  
 Chatushloki Bhagwat, meaning the essence of the Bhagwat in four verses.  
 Chatushloki Mahabharata, pronounce chatushloki mahabhaarat, means a summery of the Mahabharata in four verses.  
 Cheer haran, meaning stealing of garments  
 Chetan shakti, pronounced che`tan shakti, meaning the power of the spirit  
 Chetan, pronounced che`tan, meaning awareness, or the spirit  
 Chid means pure awareness  
 Chinmatra satta, pronounced chinmaatra satta, meaning the bare awareness and existence  
 Chinmay, meaning animate  
 Chitrajalpa, meaning wild talk

Chitraketu, pronounced chitrake`tu.  
 Chitralekha, pronounced chitrale`khaa  
 Chitswaroop, meaning knowledge incarnate  
 Chitta shuddhi, meaning lucid mental condition.  
 Chitta, meaning attentiveness  
 Daan, meaning donation or charity  
 Dadhichi, pronounced dadheechee, a sage called Dahyarvana.  
 Dadiyasaas, meaning grandmother-in-law.  
 Daityabhaav, meaning demonic feelings  
 Daityas, meaning demons.  
 Daiva visarga means those with Godly tendencies.  
 Daiva, meaning Godly.  
 Daivi, meaning Godly  
 Dakshina, pronounced dakshinaa, meaning monetary gift to a Brahmin  
 Dakshinayana, pronounced dakshinaayan, meaning the dark period.  
 Dama, pronounced daam, meaning bribes.  
 Danda, meaning punishment.  
 Daridra Narayana, the Lord in the form of the beggar  
 Darshan Shastra, meaning the theology of religious philosophy  
 Daruk, pronounced daaruk  
 Dau dada, meaning elder brother, a name of Balaramji  
 Deha Buddhi, pronounced de`ha, means thinking (buddhi) that we are the body (deha)  
 Dehadhyas, pronounced de`haadhyas, meaning a false identification with the body  
 Dehatma-bhram pronounced de`haatmabhram, means a mistaken identification of the Atman being the de`ha (body).  
 Deshantar, pronounced de`shantar, meaning a change of land.  
 Dev Lok, pronounced de`v lok, meaning the Land of the Devtas  
 Devagni, pronounced de`vaagni, meaning a divine fire  
 Devansh, pronounced de`vansh, meaning with a percentage of the Devta.  
 Devarshi, pronounced de`varshi, meaning the Rishi of the Devtas, Narada.  
 Devasura sangram, pronounced de`vaasur sangraam, meaning the war between the demigods and the demons  
 Devi, pronounced de`vi, meaning Goddess, a respectful form of addressing a lady.  
 Deviji, pronounced de`viji, meaning goddess, a respectful form of addressing a lady.  
 Devlok, pronounced de`vlok, meaning the land of the Devtas  
 Devnyas, pronounced de`vnyas, meaning a nyas of a Devta.  
 Devraj, pronounced de`vraj, meaning Indra, the King of the Devtas.  
 Devta, pronounced de`vtaa, meaning demigod  
 Dhanush Yagya, a spiritual endeavor  
 Dharana Shakti, pronounced dhaaranaa Shakti, meaning the power of upholding.  
 Dharana Yoga, pronounced dhaarnaa yog, means dwelling mentally upon the Lord in meditation  
 Dharini pronounced dhaarini, meaning the supporting power  
 Dharma bhoomi, meaning the land of Dharma.  
 Dharma is the first of four human achievements, meaning righteousness  
 Dharma sankat, meaning a dilemma of what is right  
 Dharma Shakti, meaning the strength of righteousness  
 Dharma shastras, pronounced shastras, meaning scriptures pertaining to religion

Dharmaatmas, pronounced dharmaatmaas, meaning those who are religious and ethical.  
 Dharmabhas, pronounced dharmabhaas, meaning an illusion of Dharma  
 Dharmaraj, pronounced Dharmaraaj, another name for the Lord of death.  
 Dharmashray, pronounced dharmashray, meaning the protection of Dharma  
 Dharmic, pronounced dhaarmik, meaning pertaining to Dharma.  
 Dharna, pronounced dhaarnaa, meaning fixing one's attention  
 Dhenu, pronounced dhe`nu  
 Dhenukasura, pronounced dhe`nukaasur, meaning the demon Dhenu  
 Dhobi, meaning washer man  
 Dhritarashtra means one who holds on the Nation, symbolizing a greed for power and position.  
 Dhriti pradhan, pronounced dhriti pradhaan, dhriti means the power to hold on, and pradhan means predominantly.  
 Dhruvaloka meaning the land of Dhruva.  
 Dhyana, pronounced dhyaan, meaning meditation.  
 Digvijay, meaning the conquest of neighboring kingdoms  
 Drashtaa meaning the observer or witness  
 Dravyadvait, meaning non-duality of matter  
 Drishti, meaning vision  
 Drishti-srishti, meaning a vision of the world.  
 Drishya, meaning the scene  
 Dukha, meaning sorrow  
 Dukha-nasha, pronounced dukha-naash, meaning the destroying of sorrows  
 Dupatta, pronounced dupattaa, meaning a cloth worn over the shoulders  
 Duragraha, pronounced duraagraha, meaning a negative urge  
 Dussang, meaning bad company  
 Dvaadashakshara means of twelve words.  
 Dvadashatma, pronounced dvaadash, meaning twelve +Atma, pronounced aatma, meaning soul  
 Dvaitadvait meaning partial Non-duality,  
 Dvapara Yuga, pronounced dvaapar, meaning the period of time called Dvapara  
 Dvesh, pronounced dve`sh, meaning aversion  
 Dwarka, pronounced dwaarkaa  
 Falantar, pronounced falaantar, meaning a change of result.  
 Gada, pronounced gadaa, meaning mace.  
 Gandha, meaning fragrance  
 Gandharva, meaning a celestial being.  
 Ganga, pronounced gangaa  
 Gangaji, ji is an affix denoting respect  
 Garal, meaning poison.  
 Garbhadhan, pronounced garbhaadhaan, meaning implanting the seed.  
 Garuda, meaning eagle, the bird which the Lord rides.  
 Garudaji, ji is a respectful affix  
 Gaurishankar means the Lord Shankar, with his consort, Gauri. The two are as one.  
 Gayatri is a powerful mantra, giving the essence of the Vedas.  
 Ghada, pronounced ghadaa, meaning a pot, symbolizing the human body  
 Ghadis, pronounced ghadees, meaning a measure of time. One ghadi is twenty four minutes.

Ghee, meaning rarified butter  
 Girinar, pronounced girinaar  
 Giriraj, pronounced giriraj  
 Gnan marg, pronounced gnan marg, meaning the path of knowledge  
 Gnan Pradhan, pronounced gnaan, meaning dominated by knowledge.  
 Gnan, pronounced gnaan, meaning Knowledge  
 Gnanadrishti, pronounced gnaandrishti, meaning the vision with Knowledge  
 Gnanayoga, pronounced gnaanyog, meaning uniting with the Lord through knowledge  
 Gnanendriyas, pronounced gnaane`ndreeyas, meaning sense organs  
 Gnanagni, pronounced gnaanaagni, meaning the purifying fire of Knowledge  
 Gnani, pronounced gnaani, meaning an enlightened person  
 Go-Charan, pronounced gochaaran, meaning grazing cattle  
 Goloka means the land (loka) where Shri Krishna lives with His beloved cows (go)  
 Gomata, pronounced gomaataa, meaning the mother cow  
 Gopa-Gopis, meaning cowherd and cowherd women  
 Gopa-kumaris, meaning the daughters of the Gopas  
 Gopal, meaning child Krishna  
 Gopi Geet, meaning the song of the Gopis  
 Gopis, meaning milkmaids  
 Gorochan, a yellow pigment, having medicinal properties  
 Govardhan, another name of the Giriraj mountain, situated near Vraja  
 Govind, a name of Shri Krishna  
 Graha, meaning crocodile, or an astrological planet  
 Grihastha Dharma means the Dharma for the householders.  
 Grihastha, meaning householder  
 Grihasthashram, meaning the householder stage  
 Gunas, meaning latent tendencies.  
 Gunateeta Bhakti, means devotion (bhakti) which is beyond the three Gunas  
 Guru Dakshina, pronounced guru dakshinaa, meaning a gift to the Guru  
 Guru seva, pronounced guru se`vaa, meaning service to the Guru  
 Gurukul, meaning the Guru's Ashram  
 Gwaal baal, meaning the cowherd boys.  
 Gwaals, meaning cowherds  
 Haath, meaning hand.  
 Hansa, meaning swan  
 Hansavatara, pronounced hansaavtaar, meaning the Lord's descent as a swan  
 Hathras, pronounced haathras.  
 Havan, the fire where oblations are poured in a Yagya.  
 Havishya, meaning offerings made in the ritual fire worship.  
 Hayagreeva, a demon with a horse's neck  
 Hiranyagarbha Chaitanya, meaning the spirit in the golden egg of the universe  
 Hiranyagarbha means the primordial egg, in which the whole universe exists  
 Hriday Prasad, pronounced hriday prasaad, means the gift of the heart, which is happiness.  
 Ichcha Prasuti, pronounced ichchaa prasooti, meaning the ability to deliver the baby at will.  
 Idam, meaning 'this'  
 Indra, the Lord of the Devtas, who controls the rains.



Indraloka, meaning the land of Indra, that is heaven  
 Indriya-jaya means control over the sense organs  
 Indriyas, meaning the organs  
 Ishanukatha Skandha, meaning the Skandha which contains the stories of the Lord  
 Ishwara Chaitanya, meaning the spirit in the form of the Lord with attributes  
 Ishwara, pronounced eeshvar, meaning the Almighty God, the supreme Soul.  
 Itihases, pronounced itihaases, meaning histories  
 Jaati, meaning species  
 Jada Bharata, Jada meaning foolish, and Jada Bharata means the Bharata who behaved like a foolish person.  
 Jada, meaning foolish  
 Jagat, meaning the world  
 Jambavan, pronounced jaambavaan  
 Jambavati, pronounced jaambavati  
 Japa, meaning a ritual chanting with the rosary.  
 Jara, pronounced jaraa, meaning old age  
 Jarasandh, pronounced jaraasandh  
 Jatakarma, pronounced jaatkarma, a ritual which is carried out when a baby is born.  
 Jay ghosh, meaning victory cry  
 Jeeva, meaning an individual soul  
 Jeeva-chaitanya, meaning the spirit within the mortal body, or individual spirit  
 Jeevanmukta, meaning a liberated soul  
 Jeevanmukti, meaning being liberated in this life  
 Jeevatma, pronounced jeevaatmaa, meaning an individual soul  
 Jhaari, meaning a vessel with a spout  
 Jigyasu, pronounced jigyaasu, means a seeker of the ultimate Truth.  
 Jitendriya, pronounced jite`ndriya, meaning one who has control over his sense organs  
 Jootha, pronounced joothaa, meaning rendered impure by the touch of the lips  
 Kaal, means time, or death.  
 Kaamana means desire  
 Kaamanuja means the younger brother of Kaam, i.e. anger  
 Kaarshini Bhagwat, the Bhagwat about Krishna  
 Kachap Avatar, pronounced kacchap avataar, meaning the Lord's descent as a turtle  
 Kachap, meaning tortoise.  
 Kahaars, meaning palanquin bearers.  
 Kailash, meaning the abode of the Lord Shiva  
 Kaimatik, meaning estimate.  
 Kaimutik, meaning indicative  
 Kaitabh symbolizes aversion.  
 Kaivalya, meaning the state of pure existence  
 Kajal, pronounced kaajal, meaning myrrh.  
 Kala, pronounced kaal, meaning Time, or death  
 Kalachakra, pronounced kaalchakra, meaning the wheel of Time  
 Kalas, pronounced kalaas, meaning portions  
 Kalashray, pronounced kaalaashray, meaning the protection of Time  
 Kali Kaal means the age of Kali.  
 Kalindi, pronounced kaalindee  
 Kalindiji, pronounced kaalindiji, another name for Yamunaji.

Kaliyuga, meaning the age of Kali  
 Kalpa, meaning a period of time  
 Kalpataru, meaning Wish-fulfilling tree.  
 Kalpavriksha, meaning the wish fulfilling tree  
 Kalyavan, pronounced kaalyavan  
 Kama Shastra, pronounced kaam shaastra, meaning the science of love making  
 Kama, pronounced kaam, meaning desire, or the Devta of desire  
 Kamadhenu, pronounced kaamadhe`nu, meaning the wish-fulfilling cow  
 Kamadhuk, pronounced kaamdruk, meaning wish fulfilling  
 Kamandalu, meaning a vessel for carrying water.  
 Kanhaiya, an affectionate name for Shri Krishna  
 Karan means the instrument  
 Karan, pronounced kaaran, meaning cause  
 Karma gnan meaning knowledge of the right action.  
 Karma Kshetra, pronounce kshe`tra, meaning the land of work.  
 Karma Pradhan, pronounced pradhaan, meaning dominated by action.  
 Karma Yogi meaning one who yokes himself to the Lord through his actions.  
 Karma, meaning actions  
 Karmabandhan, meaning being attached to work  
 Karmafal, meaning the fruit of the action  
 Karma-kand, pronounced karma-kaand, meaning ritualistic worship of the scriptures  
 Karmayoga, meaning the work which yokes us to the Lord  
 Karmendriyas, pronounced karma`ndreeyas, meaning the organs of action.  
 Karta, pronounced kartaa, meaning the one who acts, the doer  
 Karta-bhokta, pronounced katraa-bhoktaa, meaning the one who acts and experiences –  
 the doer and the enjoyer  
 Karun, meaning pathetic  
 Karunavarunalaaya, pronounced karunaavarunaalay, meaning the sea of compassion  
 Karya, pronounced kaarya, meaning the act, or the effect  
 Kashi, pronounced kaashi  
 Kathaa, meaning discourse, or talks about the Lord  
 Katyayan, pronounced katyaayan.  
 Katyayini, pronounced katyaayini  
 Kaustubh, meaning the jewel that clings to the chest of the Lord  
 Kayadhu, pronounced kayaadhu.  
 Keshi, pronounced ke`shi  
 Keshini, pronounced ke`shini  
 Ketu, pronounced ke`tu  
 Khadau, meaning wooden slippers  
 Khala, meaning wicked person  
 Kheer, a sweet dish of rice and milk  
 Khel, pronounced khe`l, meaning play  
 Kirat, pronounced kiraat, etc are named of backward tribes.  
 Kirtan, pronounced keertan, means singing the Lord's glories, or chanting His name  
 musically.  
 Kosas, each kosa is two miles.  
 Koshas are the imaginary sheaths of nescience  
 Krama Mukti means liberation in stages.

Kripamurti, pronounced kripaamurti, meaning the embodiment of Grace  
 Krishi Laxmi, the wealth of agriculture  
 Krishna charitra, the biography of Krishna  
 Krishnapaksha, meaning the dark fortnight.  
 Krishnavartmaa, meaning a lowly person  
 Kriya Yoga, pronounced kriyaa yog, meaning the action(kriya) which unites(yoga) us to the Lord  
 Kriyadvaita, pronounced kriyaadvait, meaning the non-duality of action  
 Kriyayoga, pronounced kriyaayog, meaning offering one's actions to the Lord as worship  
 Krodha, meaning anger.  
 Krura meaning cruel  
 Kshama, pronounced kshamaa, meaning forgiveness  
 Kshatriya, meaning the warrior caste.  
 Ksheersagar, pronounced ksheersaagar, meaning the milky ocean  
 Kundalini Shakti, also called the serpent power, which resides at the base of the spine and can be tapped by Yogic exercises  
 Kuru Vansha, meaning the lineage of the Kurus  
 Kurukshetra, pronounced kurukshe`tra  
 Kusha, pronounced kushaa, a type of grass used for religious rituals  
 Laa-javab, laa-saani, meaning incomparable, the best.  
 Lajja, pronounced lajjaa, meaning sense of shame  
 Lala, pronounced laalaa, meaning son  
 Laxmi, the consort of the Lord Narayana, and the goddess of Grace and prosperity  
 Laxmiji is the consort of the Lord Vishnu.  
 Laxmipati, meaning the husband of Laxmi, the goddess of grace and prosperity  
 Laxmirahit, meaning bereft of wealth and beauty  
 Leela means play, frolic, or caprice of the Lord.  
 Lobha meaning greed.  
 Loka, meaning this world  
 Loka-parloka, meaning this world and the heavenly world to which the soul goes after death, as a reward for meritorious deeds  
 Maadan, meaning intoxication  
 Madhu symbolizes attachment  
 Madhur rasa, meaning romantic love  
 Madhur, meaning romantic and sweet  
 Maha Raas, pronounced mahaa raas, meaning the great raas  
 Mahabhav, pronounced mahaa bhaav, meaning overwhelming emotion  
 Mahakalpa, meaning the great period of time  
 Mahamuni, pronounced mahaamunees, meaning the great sage  
 Mahapralay, pronounced mahaapralay, meaning total dissolution  
 Mahapuran, pronounced mahaapuraan, meaning the great history.  
 Mahapurush, pronounced mahaapurush, meaning a great man, or great men  
 Maharaj, pronounced mahaaraj, meaning a king amongst men.  
 Mahat means the Universal spirit.  
 Mahatmas, pronounced mahaatmaas, meaning great souls.  
 Mahatmya, pronounced maahaatmya, meaning the chapters clarifying the importance  
 Mahattattva, meaning the Soul  
 Mahavishnu, pronounced mahaavishnu, meaning the Great Vishnu

Mahayoga, pronounced mahaayog, meaning great unification  
 Mala, pronounced maalaa,  
 Malati, meaning jasmine.  
 Mamata, pronounced mamataa, means fondness or attachment.  
 Mamatva, meaning possessive partiality  
 Mana, pronounced maan, meaning pride  
 Mana, pronounced mun, meaning mind  
 Manan means giving deep thought to what we have heard about the Lord.  
 Manasik diksha, pronounced maanasik deekshaa, meaning telepathic initiation  
 Manav Dharma means dharma for humans.  
 Mangala Charan, pronounced mangalaa charan, means propitious invocation.  
 Mani, meaning a precious gem  
 Manomaya is the mind, the subtle body  
 Manomaya Kosha, meaning the sheath of the mind  
 Mano-vijay means conquering the mind's impulses  
 Manthan, meaning churning  
 Mantra nyas, meaning a nyas done through a mantra.  
 Mantra, meaning a mystical chant  
 Manusmriti, meaning the code of conduct established by Swayambhuva Manu  
 Manvantar, meaning a period of Time  
 Marich, pronounced maareech  
 Marichi, pronounced maarichi.  
 Marutganas are the sons of Diti who became Devtas.  
 Maryada, pronounced maryaadaa, meaning the limits of decency.  
 Mathani, pronounced mathaani, meaning the churning rod  
 Matsya Bhagwan, meaning the Lord in the form of the fish  
 Maun, meaning remaining silent  
 Maya, pronounced maayaa, meaning the Lord's power of illusion  
 Mayadanav, pronounced muydaanav, meaning the demon Maya  
 Mil, pronounced meel, meaning mixed.  
 Mithila, pronounced mithilaa  
 Mithilapuri, pronounced mithilaapuri, meaning the city of Mithila  
 Mithyaa, meaning unreal.  
 Mo sama kaun kutil khala kaami, meaning, who in this world is as crooked, wicked, and full of desires, as me?  
 Modan, meaning pleasure  
 Moha, meaning attachment or delusion, or illusion  
 Mohini, meaning a supremely captivating woman  
 Moksha means liberation from worldly desires, as well as the cycle of rebirth  
 Mooladhar Chakra, pronounced moolaadhaar chakra, meaning the center of energy situated at the base of the spine  
 Mor mukut, meaning a crown with peacock feathers  
 Mor Mukuti, meaning, wearing a crown with peacock feathers  
 Mritsanjeevani Vidya is a magic spell to bring a dead person to life.  
 Mritika Buddhi, pronounced mritikaa buddhi, meaning when we believe that we are the earth/matter/substance., and not a vessel  
 Mugdha, meaning fascinated.

Mukhya samanadhikaran, pronounced mukhya samaanaadhikaran, meaning equating the self with to the Brahman  
 Mukta meaning liberated.  
 Mukti means liberation  
 Mumukshaa, meaning a desire to be liberated  
 Munis mean Sages.  
 Murlimanohar, meaning the one who looks enchanting with His flute  
 Naamkaran sanskar, pronounced naamkaran sanskaar, meaning the naming ceremony.  
 Naam-roop-rahit, meaning nameless and formless.  
 Naasti, meaning is not.  
 Nabhi, pronounced naabhi, meaning the naval  
 Nag, pronounced naag, meaning serpent  
 Nagins, pronounced naagins, meaning the wives of the nag  
 Naimisharanya – a forest called Naimish (aranya means forest)  
 Naimittik, meaning caused by some factor  
 Naisargic, meaning natural  
 Nakshatra, meaning constellation.  
 Nama-sankirtan, pronounced naam-sankirtan, meaning singing of the Lord's name  
 Nanda Bhavan, meaning the house of Nanda.  
 Nanda nandan, meaning the son of Nanda  
 Nandalal, pronounced nandlal, meaning the son of Nanda  
 Narad, pronounced naarad  
 Naraka, meaning hell.  
 Nara-Narayana, pronounced nar-naaraayan, meaning the Lord in the form of a jeeva and Ishwara  
 Narasimha is the half man, half lion form of the Lord  
 Narayana Kavacha, pronounced naaraayan kavach, this is an invisible arm our, created by the Lord Narayana when this procedure is undertaken faultlessly.  
 Narayana Sarovar, pronounced naaraayan sarovar, meaning a lake called Narayana.  
 Narayana, pronounced naraayana, means the Almighty God who abides in all.  
 Natavara, meaning the King of the drama  
 Natavaravapu, having the form of a handsome dramatist  
 Nava Yogishwaras, the nine sons of Brahma, who became supreme Yogis  
 Neti, pronounced ne`ti, meaning 'not this', and also the rope used for turning the churning rod  
 Nididhyasan, pronounced nididhyaasan, means thinking repeatedly about the Lord and all we have heard about Him.  
 Nirakar, pronounced niraakaar, meaning without form  
 Nirdhan, meaning without wealth  
 Nirdharmak, meaning without being bound by rules.  
 Nirguna Bhakti, meaning devotion to the Lord without attributes  
 Nirguna means without attributes.  
 Nirguna nishta, pronounced nirgun nishthaa, meaning abiding in the formless Brahman.  
 Nirguna tattva meaning the essence of the Lord without attributes.  
 Nirodh, meaning restriction, halting the mind's external tendency.  
 Nirukta is an exposition of the Vedas  
 Niruttar, meaning conclusive  
 Nirvikar, pronounced nirvikaar, meaning unchanging

Nisha, pronounced nishaa, meaning night.  
 Nishad, pronounced nishaad, meaning a tribal  
 Nishanath, pronounced nishaanaath, meaning the Lord of Nisha (night)  
 Nishkaam Bhakti means devotion (bhakti) without desire(kaam)  
 Nishkaam Karma meaning action without any selfish motive.  
 Nishkam, pronounced nishkaam, meaning unmotivated by selfish interest.  
 Niti, pronounced neetee, meaning ethics.  
 Nitya meaning eternal, or daily routine  
 Nitya-mukta, meaning ever free  
 Nityaroopa Buddhi means the ever-present ability to think correctly.  
 Niyama meaning routine observances or regulations.  
 Nohana, pronounced nohanaa, meaning the rope used for tying the cow's hind legs during milking  
 Nritya, meaning dance  
 Nyas, pronounced nyaas, meaning super imposition.  
 Odhnis, pronounced odhnees, meaning the cloth used by ladies as an upper garment  
 Omkara, pronounced omkaar, meaning the sound of the Oum  
 Ooti Skandha, means the Skandha which shows the (three types of) natures.  
 Paalini Shakti means the power to preserve.  
 Paapa, meaning sin  
 Paapas, meaning sins.  
 Paapatmas, pronounced paapaatmaas, meaning sinners.  
 Paapi, meaning sinner.  
 Padma Kalpa, pronounced paadm kalp, meaning the eon of Padma.  
 Padma, meaning a lotus flower.  
 Padma, pronounced padmaa, meaning the goddess Laxmi  
 Padmagandha, pronounced padmagandhaa, meaning, having the fragrance of a lotus.  
 Padmarag, pronounced padmaraag  
 Pahar, a period of three hours. The third pahar would be mid morning  
 Panchabhoot means the five elements, space, water, wind, earth and fire, of which everything is composed  
 Parabhakti, pronounced paraabhakti, meaning supreme devotion  
 Parabrahma Paramatma, pronounced Parabrahm paramaatmaa, meaning the absolute Brahman, which is the Supreme Reality  
 Paraloka, meaning heaven  
 Param means supreme  
 Param Padam, means the supreme position.  
 Paramananda, pronounced paramaanand, meaning the param (supreme) ananda (bliss).  
 Paramartha, pronounced paramaarth, meaning the highest goal, or that which is supremely real.  
 Paramatma, pronounced paramaatmaa, meaning the supreme Soul  
 Paramatma-tattva, meaning the essence of the Paramatma  
 Parameshwara, pronounced parame`shwar, meaning the supreme Ishwara.  
 Paricchinna means being separate.  
 Parikrama, pronounced parikramaa, meaning circumbulation  
 Pariplava, pronounced paariplava  
 Paripoorna, meaning absolute and total.  
 Parloka, meaning the heaven a good man goes to after death

Paroksha, meaning indirect  
 Paropakara, pronounced paropkaar, meaning obliging others  
 Pashupati, the Lord of the animals  
 Patal loka, pronounced paataal lok, means the nether world.  
 Patipriya Bhava, meaning, 'May you always be the beloved of your husband'  
 Patit Karma meaning lowly action.  
 Pitambar, pronounced peetambar, is the golden colored garment worn around the Lord's shoulders  
 Pitambardhari, pronounced peetambardhaari, meaning the one who wears a golden yellow upper garment  
 Poorna, meaning complete or absolute.  
 Praagya means the individual self in the state of deep sleep  
 Praanas, meaning the activating powers.  
 Prabhas Kshetra, pronounced prabhaas kshe`tra, meaning the region of Prabhas  
 Prachetas, pronounced prache`taas, a group of ten brothers.  
 Prachinvarhi, pronounced praachinvarhi.  
 Pragya, pronounced praagya, meaning intellect  
 Prahladi, pronounced prahlaad + ji. Ji is an affix showing respect.  
 Praja, pronounced prajaa, meaning people.  
 Prajapati, pronounced prajaapati, meaning Brahma, the Creator, also the King of the celestial people  
 Prakrit, pronounced praakrit, meaning natural  
 Prakriti, meaning Nature or the Lord's power of Creation. Prakriti is composed of the three gunas, viz. sattva, rajas, and tamas  
 Prakriti-Purusha is the duality accepted by the Lord for creating the universe  
 Prakritiyon, meaning the temperaments.  
 Pralambasura, pronounced pralambaasur, meaning the demon called Pralamb  
 Pralay means destruction or dissolution of the world  
 Pralay nyas, meaning a nyas through destruction.  
 Pralaykari, pronounced pralaykaaree, meaning, having the powers of destruction  
 Prana, meaning spirit  
 Pranama, pronounced pranaam, meaning bowing down  
 Pranav, the sound of the Oum  
 Pranay, meaning reverence  
 Pranayama, pronounced praanaayam, meaning breath control  
 Pranmaya, pronounced praanmay, means the sheath of vital airs  
 Prapancha, meaning illusion of the world  
 Prapti, pronounced praapti  
 Prarabdha-nasha, pronounced prarabdha naash, meaning the destruction of the fruits of actions  
 Prasad, pronounced prasaad, meaning a blessing, symbolized by food  
 Pratipada, pronounced pratipadaa, meaning the first lunar date  
 Pratyahar, pronounced pratyahaar, meaning withdrawal of senses from their objects  
 Pratyak chaitanya, meaning experience of existence  
 Prayashchit, pronounced prayaashchit, meaning penance or atonement  
 Prayatna shaithilya, meaning half-hearted effort  
 Prem, pronounced pre`m, meaning pure love  
 Prem-Bhakti, pronounced pre`m-bhakti, meaning loving devotion

Prikrama, pronounced parikramaa, meaning respectful circumambulation  
 Prithvi, meaning Mother Earth  
 Puja, pronounced pooja, meaning ritual worship  
 Puja, pronounced poojaa, meaning ritualistic worship  
 Punsavan, meaning the fetus is five months. Also milky.  
 Punya, meaning spiritual merit.  
 Puranacharya, pronounced puranaachaarya, meaning a Teacher of a Purana  
 Puranas, pronounced puraanas, meaning mythological scriptures  
 Puranjanopakhyan, pronounced puranjanopaakhyaan, meaning the story of Puranjana.  
 Purnima, pronounced poornimaa, meaning the full moon  
 Purohit, meaning a learned Brahmin, well versed in rituals.  
 Puroorva, pronounced puroorvaa  
 Purusha, meaning Soul  
 Purusha-Prakriti, meaning the Lord and His power of Creation  
 Purusharthta, pronounced purusharthas, meaning manly achievements or endeavor  
 Purushottama means best amongst men, a name of the Lord.  
 Pushti, meaning nourishing.  
 Putana, pronounced pootnaa, a demoness.  
 Putra, meaning son.  
 Putravati Bhava, meaning 'May you have children'  
 Putreshti Yagya, pronounced putre`shti, meaning a Yagya for getting a son.  
 Quintal a measure of weight. Five quintals are about 10 cwts  
 Raagatmika Bhakti, pronounced raagaatmikaa bhakti, meaning a lover-like devotion.  
 Raas Leela, meaning the Lord's dance frolic  
 Raas Vilas, pronounced raas vilaas, meaning the pleasures of the raas dance  
 Radharani, pronounced raadhaaraanee  
 Raga, meaning attachment  
 Raga-dvesh, pronounced raag-dve`sh, meaning attachment-aversion  
 Rahasya, meaning secret  
 Rahu, pronounced raahu  
 Raj Dharma means the Dharma for the rulers  
 Raja, pronounced raajaa, meaning a King.  
 Raja, pronounced raj, means the red dust and also the rajo guna which is a mixed tendency of human nature.  
 Rajan, address for a King  
 Rajarshi, meaning a rishi (sage) who rules with godly values, and without attachment, and also a King who has the qualities of a Rishi  
 Rajashray, pronounced raajaashray, meaning the protection of the King  
 Rajasic, pronounced raajasik, meaning of the rajoguna, with mixed tendencies  
 Rajoguna, one of the three human tendencies, Rajoguna is an admixture of good and bad tendencies, and predominantly restless.  
 Rajoguni, meaning the one with mixed tendencies  
 Rakshasa meaning demon.  
 Rama Rajya, pronounced raam raajya, meaning the Rule of Rama  
 Ramanuja mean the younger brother of Rama.  
 Ramavatar, pronounced raamavtaar, meaning the Lord's Avatar as Rama  
 Ramcharit, pronounce raamcharit, meaning the biography of Rama  
 Ranjan meaning pleasure.



Rasa means sweetness incarnate  
 Rasa Vidya, pronounced rus vidyaa, meaning the skill for giving and obtaining pleasure  
 Rasamaya means filled with sweetness  
 Rasas, meaning the different kinds of emotions, or tastes  
 Rasiyas, pronounced rasiyaas, meaning folk songs depicting romance, etc  
 Rathangapani, pronounced rathaangapaani, meaning having a wheel of a chariot in the hand. A name of the Lord  
 Revti, pronounced re`vti  
 Rishi means a sage.  
 Rishi-Munis, meaning sages and ascetics  
 Roop, meaning form  
 Roti, meaning a round, flat bread  
 Rudra is another name for the Lord Shiva  
 Saakar meaning with form.  
 Saakshi, meaning witness  
 Saayujya, meaning intimate union  
 Sacchidananda, sad=truth, Chid=awareness, anand=bliss, makes sacchidananda, the Brahman  
 Sacchidanandaghan, pronounced sacchidaanandghan, means the essence of the Lord.  
 Sad = existence, Chid=eternal awareness, Anand=absolute bliss. Ghan means full of  
 Sad means eternal reality  
 Saddharma, meaning good Dharma  
 Sadgati, meaning higher worlds attained after death  
 Sadguru meaning a true Guru.  
 Sadhak, pronounced saadhak, meaning one who strives to attain the Lord  
 Sadhan Chatushtay, pronounced saadhan chatushtay, meaning the four requisites for spiritual practice, which include 1) vive`k, 2) vairagya, 3) the sextet called shat sampattis, such as a) shama, b) dama, c) uparati, d) titikshaa, e) shraddhaa, f) samaadhaan, and 4) Mumukshaa  
 Sadhana, pronounced saadhanaa, meaning effort for spiritual progress.  
 Sadharma Skandha, meaning the Skandha of the religion of the Truth  
 Sadhus, pronounced saadhoos, meaning men of God  
 Sadhuta, pronounced saadhutaa, meaning saintliness.  
 Sadyomukti means instantaneous liberation.  
 Saguna Bhakti, meaning devotion to the Lord with attributes  
 Saguna nishta, pronounced sagun nishthaa, meaning faith in the Brahman with form.  
 Saguna tattva, meaning the essence of the Lord with attributes.  
 Saguna, meaning with attributes  
 Sahadev, pronounced sahade`v  
 Sahkya rasa, meaning the sweetness of friendship  
 Sakaam, means with a desire.  
 Sakar, pronounced saakaar, meaning with form  
 Saketloka, pronounced sake`tlok, means the land where Shri Rama lives  
 Sakhya, meaning friendship  
 Sakshi, pronounced saakshi, meaning witness  
 Sama, pronounced saam, meaning reasoning.  
 Samaadhi means deep meditation  
 Samadarshi, meaning one who sees the same essence in all

Samadhan, pronounced samaadhaan, meaning reaching the right understanding.  
 Samadhi, pronounced samaadhee, meaning deep meditation  
 Samatva, meaning equanimity towards all.  
 Samatvaguna means the quality of equanimity.  
 Samba, pronounced saamb  
 Sampraday, pronounced sampradaay, meaning religious sect.  
 Samudra manthan, meaning the churning of the ocean  
 Sanakadi, pronounced sanakaadee, meaning Sanak and others  
 Sanatkumaradis, pronounced sanatkumaaraadis, meaning Sanatkumar and other sages  
 Sandhi, meaning connecting point  
 Sandhya vandan, pronounced sandhyaa vandan, meaning the ritual of purification  
 Sangraha, meaning accumulation  
 Sanjalpa, meaning constructive talk  
 Sankalpa, meaning resolve, or oath.  
 Sankalpamana means the mind which contains desires.  
 Sankarshana is another name for Shesha.  
 Sankhya Yoga, meaning the Sankhya philosophy  
 Sankhya, pronounced saankhya, meaning a school of philosophy  
 Sankhya-yoga, Sankhya is one of the six schools of philosophy  
 Sanmaya means reality incarnate  
 Sanmayi meaning eternal reality  
 Sansara, pronounced sansaar, meaning the world we interact in.  
 Sanskaras, pronounced sanskaaraas, meaning deep-seated impressions, and also rituals which impart culture  
 Sanskritiyon, meaning the traditional beliefs.  
 Sant, meaning Saint  
 Santosh, meaning being satisfied with whatever one gets  
 Sanyas, pronounced sanyaas, meaning total renunciation  
 Sanyashrama, pronounced sanyaasashram, meaning renunciation  
 Sanyasi, pronounced sanyaasi, meaning monk  
 Sanyog, meaning being united with the beloved  
 Saptarshis, meaning the seven sages  
 Sarpa-yagya, meaning the fire worship to kill all snakes  
 Sarva samartha, means capable of doing everything  
 Sarvaatma, pronounced sarvaatmaa, meaning the Atma of all.  
 Sat, meaning the real.  
 Sat-Chid, meaning truth and awareness.  
 Sati is the consort of Shiva before she is born as Parvati, a devoted wife  
 Satis, Sati was the custom when the wives immolated themselves with the body of their husbands  
 Satpurush, meaning a man, or men of Truth  
 Satrajit, pronounced satraajit  
 Satsang, meaning the company of Godly people, or discourses  
 Satswaroop, meaning Truth incarnate  
 Satta, pronounced sattaa, meaning power  
 Sattvaguna means the highest tendency.  
 Sattvaguna-rajoguna-tamoguna, meaning the lofty, mixed and base tendencies  
 Sattvik, pronounced saatvik, meaning having pure tendencies

Satva, is the highest tendency  
 Satvik, pronounced saatvik, means close to the Truth  
 Satvikta, pronounced saatviktaa, meaning purity  
 Satya Buddhi means the intellect which is inclined towards the Truth.  
 Satya means the truth.  
 Saubhagyavati Bahva, meaning, 'May you have the good fortune of your husband outliving you'  
 Saur Tattva, meaning the essence of the Sun  
 Saur, meaning Sun  
 Saut, meaning another wife of the husband.  
 Savitri is another name for the Gayatri mantra, and also the consort of Brahma.  
 Seemantopanayan, when the fetus is seven months.  
 Shabarasura, pronounced shambaraasur  
 Shabda, meaning sound  
 Shadvikar, pronounced shadvikaar, meaning the six wrong tendencies in human nature.  
 These are desire, anger, greed, attachment, arrogance, and envy  
 Shaivas means those who worship the Lord in the form of Shiva.  
 Shaiya, pronounced shaiyaa, means bed  
 Shakatasura, pronounced shakataasur.  
 Shaktas, pronounced shaaktas, meaning those who worship the female form of the Lord, as Shakti.  
 Shakti, meaning power and strength.  
 Shaligram Shila, pronounced shaaligraam shila, meaning a round stone worshipped as Vishnu  
 Shalva, pronounced shaalv  
 Shama-dama, shama means peacefulness, tranquility, composure, and dama means control of the senses  
 Shandamark, pronounced shandaamark, the two names, Shand + Amark, joined together.  
 Shankarji another name for the Lord Shiva  
 Shankha, meaning conch shell.  
 Shanta, pronounced shaant, meaning peace  
 Shantachitta, pronounced shaantchitts, meaning one who is tranquil  
 Shantananda, pronounced shantaanand, meaning the enjoyment of peace.  
 Shantarasa, pronounced shaantrus, meaning the bliss of peace  
 Shanti Parva, pronounced shaanti parv, meaning the section on peace, in the Mahabharata  
 Shanti, pronounced shaanti, meaning peace  
 Sharad, meaning Autumn  
 Sharmishtha, pronounced sharmishthaa, the daughter of Vrishaparva  
 Shashwat, pronounced shaashvat, meaning eternal.  
 Shastras, pronounced shaastras, meaning the scriptures or religious texts  
 Shauch, meaning cleanliness  
 Shaunakadis, pronounced shaunakaadis, meaning Shaunak and others.  
 Shesh, pronounced she'sh, meaning the thousand headed serpent upon whom the Lord Narayana reposes. Balaramji is considered to be the Shesh Avatar  
 Shesha Bhagwan, pronounced she'sha bhagavaan, means the Lord, as His thousand headed serpent, upon whom He reclines, who abides during dissolution.

Sheshagufa, pronounced she`shgufaa, meaning the cave of Shesha, the thousand headed serpent upon who the Lord Vishnu reclines

Sheshashaiya, pronounced she`shshaiyaa, meaning the thousand headed serpent, Shesha, upon which the Lord Narayana reclines

Sheshnag, pronounced she`shnaag, meaning the thousand headed serpent upon whom the Lord Narayana reclines

Shishupal, pronounced shishupaal

Shiva Purana, pronounced shiv puraana, meaning the story of the Lord Shiva.

Shivamahimnastotra is a famous poem, eulogizing the greatness of the Lord Shiva.

Shloka, meaning couplet

Shraadhha, meaning rituals for ancestors

Shraddha, pronounced shraddhaa, meaning faith with reverence

Shrama, meaning labor

Shravan means listening to discourses about the Lord or the scriptures, and imbuing their essence.

Shravan, pronounced shraavan, the name of a lunar month.

Shreedamaacharita, meaning the life of Shreedamaa

Shringar, pronounced shringaar, meaning romance or decoration

Shriniketan, pronounced shreenike`tan, meaning the abode of Shree – Laxmi – the goddess of grace and prosperity

Shripati, meaning Vishnu, the husband of Shree – Laxmi – the goddess of grace and prosperity

Shrivatsa, meaning the little ring of golden hair on the Lord's chest

Shrivigraha means the beautiful body of the Lord, or His image

Shrutis means divine messages heard directly by the ancient sages, verses of the Vedas

Shuddha, meaning pure

Shudra, a low caste, a laborer

Shunya, meaning nihil

Shyamsundar, pronounced syaamsundar, meaning blue-hued and beautiful Krishna

Siddha purusha, meaning a person possessing super natural powers.

Siddhi, meaning supernatural powers.

Singhasana, pronounced singhaasan, meaning throne-like seat

Skandha, the Shrimad Bhagwat is divided into twelve Skandhas, or cantos

Smaran means remembering the Lord.

Smart Dharma, pronounced smaart Dharma, meaning pertaining to the laws of the Smritis

Sneha, pronounced sne`h, meaning affection

Sparsha, meaning touch

Srishti nyas, meaning the nyas of Creation.

Srishti-drishti, meaning the world which is seen .

Sthirata, meaning keeping still

Sthiti nyas, meaning a nyas of through a state.

Sthiti, meaning condition or state

Stotra means a eulogizing verse.

Stuti, meaning verses of praise.

Sudarshan Chakra, the Lord's discus, called Sudarshan

Sudas, pronounced sudaas

Sudharma Sabha, pronounced sudharmaa sabhaa, the name of the Court (or conference hall) of Shri Krishna, in Dwarka.  
 Sukha, meaning happiness  
 Surya Vansha, meaning the lineage of the sun  
 Surya, meaning the Sun  
 Suta, pronounced soota  
 Satal Loka, meaning the land called Satal  
 Svaadhyay, meaning study  
 Svabhaav, meaning temperament  
 Svajan-mohini Maya, meaning the Maya which affects those who are dear to the Lord.  
 Svarga, meaning heaven  
 Svarna Laxmi, the wealth of gold  
 Sveta-dveep, pronounced sve`t-dveep, meaning the white island  
 Swaartha, meaning self interest  
 Swami, pronounced svaami, meaning My Lord  
 Swasti Vaachan, meaning the chanting of verses for inviting auspiciousness  
 Swayambu means the self-created, a name of Brahma  
 Swayamvara, meaning then the bride chooses the man she wants to marry  
 Taapa, meaning penance, or religious austerility  
 Tadaka-vadh, pronounced taadkaa vadh, meaning the killing of Tadaka  
 Taijas Hiranyagarbha, the individual self, while dreaming, is called Taijas, Hiranyagarbh is the totality of subtle experiences corresponding to the dream state.  
 Tamasik, pronounced taamasik, means lowly tendencies  
 Tamoguna is one of the three human tendencies. Tamoguna is filled with sloth and negativity.  
 Tandav, pronounced taandav, meaning the dance of destruction  
 Tanmatras, pronounced tanmaatras, the subtle forms of the five elements.  
 Tantras, meaning the mystical formulas for powers, sometimes used for negative results  
 Tapa means to practice austerity, for spiritual achievement.  
 Tapasya pronounced tapasyaa, means to practice asceticism  
 Tat Padartha, meaning the 'That' factor  
 Tat, meaning That  
 Tattva dhyana, pronounced tattva dhyaan, means meditating on the essence.  
 Tattva meaning element, essence or supreme reality  
 Tattva vigyaan means the science of the Tattva, essence of the Lord.  
 Tattvagnan , pronounced tattvagnan, meaning the knowledge (gnan) of the Brahman  
 Tattvagnani, pronounced tattvagnaani, meaning a person who knows the essence of the Brahman  
 Tatvamasi, a Vedic aphorism, meaning 'You' are 'That', teaching that the individual soul is not separate from the Brahman  
 Teerthayatra, pronounced teerthyaatraa, meaning visiting places of pilgrimage  
 Thread ceremony is a ritual for a boy, where the important Gayatri Mantra is given for spiritual progress.  
 Til, meaning aniseed.  
 Tilak, meaning a mark made on the forehead, or the most superior  
 Tithi, meaning the lunar date.  
 Titiksha, meaning endurance  
 Titikshu Brahmin, meaning the Brahmin with stoic endurance

Treta Yuga, pronounced tre`taa yug, meaning the eon of Time called Treta  
 Trikaladarshi, pronounced trikaaldarshi, meaning one who has knowledge of the past, present and future  
 Triloki, meaning three worlds  
 Trinavarta, pronounced trinaavart, a demon who came in the form of a whirlwind.  
 Trishul, pronounced trishool, meaning a three-pronged spear.  
 Trivakra, pronounced trivakraa, meaning bent in three places  
 Trivikram, meaning so immense that He filled all the three worlds  
 Turiyapada brahmaikya means the ultimate, all-pervading essence of the entire creation  
 Tvam padartha, pronounced tvam padaartha, meaning the 'You' factor  
 Tvam, meaning You  
 Tvam-pada, meaning the You factor  
 Tvashtaa Devta, pronounced tvastaa de`vtaa, meaning the demi god who is easily satisfied, and grants boons.  
 Tyaga, pronounced tyaag, meaning giving up  
 Ukhal bandhan, meaning tying the Lord to the pounding stone  
 Ukhal, meaning pounding stone  
 Ullu, meaning an owl, or a foolish person.  
 Upadana, pronounced upaadaan, meaning basic matter.  
 Upapatti means demonstration.  
 Upasana shastras, pronounced upaasanaa shastras, meaning the religious texts of worship with devotion.  
 Upasana, pronounced upaasanaa, meaning adoring worship  
 Upendra, pronounced upe`ndra, meaning the junior Indra  
 Utpatti means birth.  
 Uttara, pronounced uttaraa  
 Uttarayan, pronounced uttaraayan, meaning the bright period.  
 Vaachyartha, meaning the meaning of the word  
 Vaata, meaning weighing stone  
 Vadhoo, meaning wife  
 Vaibhav, meaning wealth  
 Vaidya, Ayurvedic specialist  
 Vaikunth means a heavenly place where there is no negativity, and that is where the Lord resides  
 Vairagya marg, meaning the path of renunciation  
 Vairagya, pronounced vairagya, meaning detachment  
 Vaishnav Purana, meaning a Purana pertaining to the Lord Vishnu  
 Vaishnav, meaning those who worship the Lord as Vishnu.  
 Vaishvanara, pronounced vaishvaanar  
 Vaishya meaning the traders caste.  
 Vajra, meaning thunderbolt  
 Vajranabha, pronounced vajranaabh  
 Vaman Avatar, pronounced vaamana avataar, means when the Lord descends upon earth as the little Brahmin boy called Vaman.  
 Van, pronounced vun, meaning forest  
 Vana mala, pronounced vana maalaa, meaning a garland of wild flowers  
 Vanaprastha Ashrama, pronounced vaanaprastha aashram, meaning the stage in life where the householder gets detached from the world and lives like an ascetic.

Vanasura, pronounced vaanaasur  
 Vanvasis, pronounced vanvaasees, meaning those who live in the forest  
 Varaha, pronounce varaah, the boar form of the Lord.  
 Varenya, pronounced vare`nya, meaning worth accepting  
 Varmala, pronounced varmaalaa, meaning the bridal garland  
 Varna Dharma, meaning the Dharma for the four castes  
 Varnas, meaning castes  
 Varnashrama Dharma, pronounced varnaashram dharm, meaning the Dharm prescribed for the different Castes and stages of life  
 Varuna loka, meaning the land of Varuna  
 Vasant, meaning Spring  
 Vasudev Bhagwat, pronounced vaasude`v bhaagwat, meaning the Bhagwat about Vasudev Shri Krishna  
 Vasudev, pronounced vaasude`v, the Lord who abides in all, a name of Shri Krishna  
 Vatsalya, pronounced vaatsalya, meaning motherly love  
 Vedanta, pronounced ve`daant, meaning the purport of the Vedas  
 Vedantis, pronounced ve`dantees, meaning those who believe in the theory of the Vedas, that everything is the Brahman, i.e. the non-dual reality  
 Vedic, pronounced ve`dik, meaning of the Vedas.  
 Veena, meaning a stringed instrument  
 Veer Sannyas, pronounced veer sanyaas, a system by which a warrior gives up worldly life.  
 Veerya means the seed of procreation, or manliness  
 Venu Geet, pronounced ve`nu geet, meaning the song of the flute  
 Vibhutis, meaning glories  
 Vidai, meaning the time of departure  
 Videhamukti, pronounced vide`hamukti, meaning having attained liberation outside the body. It is gained on death  
 Vidharma, meaning against Dharma  
 Vidhata, pronounced vidhaataa, meaning Providence  
 Vidhi-nishedh, pronounced vishi-nishe`dh, meaning recommended and forbidden actions  
 Vidvan, pronounced vidvaan, meaning a learned person  
 Vidya, pronounced vidyaa, meaning knowledge or science, combined with wisdom  
 Vidyadhar, pronounced vidyaadhar, meaning a celestial being  
 Vighraha, meaning division, or struggle  
 Vignyanmay means the intellectual sheath  
 Vijalpa, meaning wild talk  
 Vikalpa chitta means fluctuation indecision.  
 Vikara, pronounced vikaar, meaning mutations in our nature.  
 Vikarma, meaning negative actions  
 Vikritis, meaning mutations.  
 Vikshepanand, pronounced vikshe`panand, meaning the joy of disturbances.  
 Vimukh-mohini Maya, meaning the Maya which deludes those who are turned away from the Lord.  
 Vinay, meaning humility  
 Viraha, meaning the sorrow of being separated from the beloved  
 Virakta, meaning detached

Virat Chaitanya, pronounced viraat chaitanya, meaning the Universal spirit  
 Virat Purusha, pronounced viraat purush, meaning the immense form of the Lord, which is the whole universe  
 Virat, pronounced viraat, meaning immense, all-pervading  
 Visarga means dis-union.  
 Vish, meaning poison  
 Vishaya, objects of sense organs  
 Vishishtadvait, meaning Pure Non-duality.  
 Vishvajit, meaning victory over the world  
 Vishwakarma, pronounced vishwakarmaa, meaning the one who creates everything in the world  
 Vishwatma, pronounced vishwaatmaa, meaning the Soul of the universe  
 Vivek, pronounced vive`k, meaning discrimination, the ability to separate the real from the illusionary  
 Viyoga, meaning pangs of separation  
 Vraja, meaning the entire region around Vrindavan.  
 Vrajaraj Kumar, pronounced vrajraaj kumaar, meaning the son of the King of Vraja  
 Vrajavasis, pronounced vrajavaasis, meaning those who live in Vraja  
 Vrat, meaning a vow  
 Vrihaspati, the Guru of the Devtas  
 Vrishabh, meaning bull  
 Vrishabhanu, pronounced vrishabhaanu  
 Vritrasura, pronounced vritraasur.  
 Vyapak nyas, pronounced vyaapak nyas, meaning an all pervading nyas.  
 Vyas, pronounced vyaas  
 Vyatirek, pronounced vyatire`k, meaning variation  
 Yaduvanshi, meaning of the lineage of Yadu  
 Yagnik Brahmins, pronounced yaagnik braahmins, meaning the Brahmins doing the Yagya  
 Yagya is a ritual fire worship, an offering to the Devtas  
 Yagya Mandap, meaning the site of the Yagya  
 Yagya patnis, pronounced yagya patnees, meaning the wives of those who were doing the yagya  
 Yagya Pradhan, pronounced yagya pradhaan, meaning predominantly action oriented  
 Yagyashala, pronounced yagyashaalaa, meaning the place where the yagya is held.  
 Yagyopaveet Sanskar, pronounced yagyopaveet sanskaar, meaning the thread ceremony  
 Yagyopavit, meaning the sacred thread  
 Yajamaan, pronounced yajmaan, meaning the one who undertakes and pays for the yagya.  
 Yaksha means an ugly, strong, rich, celestial being.  
 Yama, meaning the Lord of Death. It also means abstentions or ethical restraints.  
 Yamadutas, pronounced yumdoots, meaning the messengers of Yama.  
 Yamaloka, meaning the land of Yama, the Lord of Death  
 Yama-niyama, meaning control of sense organs and a controlled lifestyle  
 Yamaraj, pronounced yamraaj, meaning King of Death  
 Yamunaji, pronounced yamunaaji, meaning the river Yamuna, whose subtle form is a divine woman.  
 Yash, meaning fame



Yashoda Lal, pronounced yashodaa laal, meaning the darling of Yashoda.  
Yashoda Maiya, meaning Mother Yashoda.  
Yashoda Nandan, meaning the son of Yashoda.  
Yoga Darshan, the eight steps to Yoga as prescribed by Sage Patanjali  
Yoga Maya, pronounced yog maayaa, meaning the Lord's power of illusion  
Yoga means yoking ourselves with the Lord. It also means the power of the Lord, applied to the world. Yoga is one of the six schools of philosophy, and also refers to powers developed through Yogic exercises.  
Yoga nidra, pronounced yog nidraa, means a deep meditation akin to a deep slumber  
Yoga-bhoga, meaning offerings of ascetic worship, or luxuries  
Yogagni, meaning a fire created with spiritual power.  
Yoga-nidra, pronounced yog-nidraa, the sleep of the Lord  
Yogeshwara, pronounced yoge`shwar, meaning the Lord of Yogis  
Yogishwara, meaning the best of the Yogis  
Yuga, the cycle of Time is divided into four Yugas or ages, Satya, Treta, Dvapar and Kali  
Yugal Geet, meaning duet